

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

REPORT FORMAT AND CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES



LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENT GROUP

Department of Planning and Land Use
Department of Public Works

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PURPOSE

These Biological Survey and Report Requirements provide guidance on conducting biological resources surveys and preparing reports for discretionary projects being processed by the Land Use and Environment Group. These guidelines are designed to:

1. Ensure the quality, accuracy and completeness of biological surveys and reports.
2. Aid in staff's efficient and consistent review of maps and documents from different consultants.
3. Provide adequate information to make appropriate planning decisions and to make determinations regarding conformance with applicable regulations.
4. Increase the efficiency of the environmental review process and avoid unnecessary time delays.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

All biological maps and reports shall follow the requirements in this document. The overall length of reports and the amount of information to include will vary depending on the size and scope of the project, the regional setting, the biological resources present and the degree of impacts proposed.

When biological resources are present on a project site, the County's Scoping Letter may require that one of the following documents be submitted.

1.1 Full Biological Resource Report (Full Report)

A Full Biological Resource Report (Full Report) is required for larger projects and/or projects with potential significant biological impacts. The full report must include a Biological Resource Map.

1.2 Biological Resource Letter Report (Letter Report)

A Biological Resources Letter Report may be adequate for smaller projects and those with limited biological resources present or expected. The determination of whether a letter report would be required is made by a County staff biologist, based on a project-specific analysis at project scoping. Based on the information provided in the biological letter report, DPLU may require additional focused surveys and/or a Full Biological Resource Report. The letter report must include a Biological Resource Map.

1.3 Biological Resource Map (Bio Map)

For projects with limited natural or naturalized areas and no sensitive species anticipated, a Biological Resources Map may be adequate without a report. The consultant may, at their option, submit a brief explanation of the map. If the County staff biologist determines that further information is necessary, the scoping letter may request other documentation be submitted with the Map.

2.0 SURVEY AND REPORT FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

2.1 General Report Guidelines

All written reports shall follow these general guidelines:

- Reports should be technical in nature and should avoid anecdotal or extraneous information.
- Reports should be concise and written in a professional manner suitable for peer review. Staff may reject reports based on quality if the report is written in such a manner that a timely and accurate review cannot be completed.

- Biological reports should be bound such that staff may easily review the document. Shorter reports may be stapled, but longer documents should be bound by other methods, such as comb binding.
- Attached plot plans and Biological Resource Maps must be to scale and contain a north arrow and both number and bar scales. When maps are reduced, adjust the scale, or mark the map “Reduced/Use Bar Scale”.
- For Full Biological Resource Reports, each chapter and subsection of the report should be clearly delineated with bold print and/or underlining and will use the numerical headings contained in these Biological Resources Survey and Report requirements.
- Draft copies of the report shall have all changes made in response to staff comments in strikeout/underline form. Final copies of the report shall be clean, with all editing marks removed.

All biological reports will be reviewed for technical accuracy and completeness by a staff biologist. Reports are considered draft until staff determines the report to be complete. Each submittal and review of a draft biological report is considered an “iteration.” During each iteration, staff will either determine the report to be complete or respond with comments for necessary changes. The County expects that the first iteration will be as complete and comprehensive as possible to address issues in the Scoping Letter. However, each report may have up to three iterations, after which project denial may be recommended due to inadequate environmental progress.

2.2 Full Biological Resource Report

2.2.1 Outline

The required sections of the full Biological Resource Report are provided in the outline below:

FULL BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES REPORT OUTLINE

COVER PAGE

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- B. Observed Species List - Fauna**
- C. Potential Sensitive Species Table – Flora**
- D. Potential Sensitive Species Table – Fauna**
- E. Natural Diversity Database Form(s) (if applicable)**
- F. Biological Resource Map and project plot plan/map (unless included within body of report)**
- G. Open Space Map (if applicable, unless included within body of report)**
- H. Signed protocol survey reports**

2.2.2 Content

Note: The numbering identified below should be used when preparing technical studies. The numbers and titles are shown in italics only for purposes of this document and are not required to be formatted in italics for the technical study.

COVER PAGE

The cover page shall include the following information:

- Project common name
- Project numbers (i.e. TM, ZAP, etc.) including the environmental log number (ER)
- Date (original report date plus all revisions) must be revised during each iteration of the draft report)
- Name of County Approved CEQA Consultant preparing document, firm name (if applicable) and address
- Signature of County Approved CEQA Consultant

- Project proponent's name and address
- The following statement: Prepared for The County of San Diego

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The table of contents must follow the order and format outlined in this document. Page numbers should be assigned when possible. Titles of each Appendix or Attachment should be listed in the order in which they are found in the document.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

Provide a list of terms and acronyms used in the report.

SUMMARY (ABSTRACT)

Provide a brief summary of the project, the biological resources present on the site, potential impacts and proposed mitigation. No new information should be provided in the summary that is not further explained elsewhere in the document. The purpose of the summary is to provide a quick reference for the public and decision-makers. Therefore, the language should be less technical than that used in the remainder of the document.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Report

Discuss the purpose of the report. Depending on the site location, type of project and biological resources, the report may document compliance with the County's MSCP Subarea Plan, Resource Protection Ordinance, Biological Mitigation Ordinance or Habitat Loss Permit Ordinance and all applicable federal and state laws.

Example language: "The purpose of this report is to document the biological resources identified as present or potentially present on the project site; identify potential biological resource impacts resulting from the proposed project; and recommend measures to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate significant impacts consistent with federal, state and local rules and regulations including the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and County of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea Plan, Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO) and Biological Mitigation Ordinance (BMO)."

1.2 Project Location and Description

Project Location. Discuss the project location in the regional and local context. Include a USGS topographic map with the site and APN clearly identified as numbered figure(s).

Project Description. Provide a very detailed description of the project, including all on-site and off-site components and any design alternatives. An 8.5"x11" or 11"x17" copy of the plot plan/map must be attached to the report as (a) numbered figure(s).

Describe the whole of the project, not just the immediate action being pursued. For example, a Tentative Map or Tentative Parcel Map proposes to subdivide property. The project in question is not just the increase in the number of lots, but the ultimate outcome of residential or commercial development. Another example is an application for a grading permit. The project is not just the immediate grading, but also the end result for which the land was graded.

The project description should be as detailed as possible, including details such as:

- Size of project site and area proposed for development.
- Purpose and scale of proposed uses associated with the project, such as residential development or recreational camping.
- Proposed structures (size, location, purpose, etc.).
- Location of all easements, including those for biological open space, steep slope easements, limited building zone easements, utilities and roads.
- Proposed or potential uses within open space, including proposed buffers, existing structures and/or uses that will continue under the proposed action, any requirements for access to archaeological/cultural sites, etc.
- Off-site improvements, such as for roads, utility extensions, or stormwater facilities.
- Fire fuel modification and vegetation management requirements including fuel modification adjacent to roads.
- Construction equipment staging areas.
- Proposed site access.

1.3 Survey Methods

Provide a discussion of literature reviews done prior to initiation of the surveys. Examples may include, but are not limited to: the U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service map for the project area; a database query of potential on-site sensitive species based on a determination of the site physical characteristics (e.g., location, elevation, soils/substrate, and topography); documentation of California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB)/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Geographical Information System (GIS) records for the project vicinity; and previous reports prepared for the project area.

Describe the methods and materials used to survey the property. At a minimum, the entire property must be walked and all biological resources recorded and mapped according to the County's Biological Resource Mapping Requirements. The length of time a survey should take is entirely dependent upon the size of the property and

the resources present. Staff may request an additional survey if the time spent in the field does not appear adequate to have recorded all resources or the results of the survey would have been significantly affected by season, time of day or weather conditions.

Surveys must include the entire project parcel(s). In addition, habitat mapping must include land 100 feet off site consistent with section 3.1.1. In rare cases where a project only affects a small portion of a large parcel, the need to survey the entire parcel may be waived. If you wish to pursue this waiver, contact the Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU) Project Manager.

Additional directed surveys may also be required based on season or sensitivity of species. Directed surveys must be performed by biologists with demonstrable knowledge in field detection of the subject species. Focused surveys for federally listed species must follow USFWS protocol, when such protocol exists. Permit numbers for biologists performing these focused surveys must be provided for each survey must be attached as a table in the biological report. If no protocol has been established, the methods of the directed search must be described in the report. At the very least, directed surveys should include walking transects across all areas of the property with potential habitat for the species. All point locations and inferred territories of these species must be included on the Biological Resources Map.

In some cases, the Director of Planning and Land Use may choose to postpone or suspend some seasonal Focused Surveys during a particular calendar year if inaccurate or inconclusive survey results are expected due to unsuitable environmental conditions such as fires, floods, or droughts. In these cases, staff will work with project applicants to determine the best course of action. Options may include one or more of the following, determined on a case-by-case basis:

- Relying on previous year surveys.
- Resurveying the property the following year (assuming proper environmental conditions).
- Using the County's Species Predictive Model to determine presence/absence (access to data from this model is coordinated through the DPLU staff biologist).
- Reviewing records from the California Native Plant Society, California Natural Diversity Database, San Diego Plant Atlas, or other reliable sources.

When a sensitive species is identified on a property, the number and density of individuals should be provided. It may also be necessary to provide these measurements (through additional field work and/or historical/available data) for off-site areas in order to fully determine the true size and extent of the local population. When feasible, the actual number of individuals should be counted in the field. When a plant species covers several acres (3 acres or more), the number and density may be estimated using a quadrat sampling method. When the plant species is a ground-cover variety or individuals are not easily discernable from one another, acreage may be used as a measurement and the density presented as a

percentage cover per acre. For wildlife species, the number of individuals should be approximated based on actual sightings and other available signs, such as fecal deposits, tracks and nests or burrows. The method by which the number of individuals and density of a species is determined must be described in the biological report.

Wetlands surveys will be required when a wetland resource or jurisdictional water is identified on project site. A basic wetland survey consists of mapping the boundaries of the wetland habitat based on the specific County, State and Federal wetland definitions. Field site visits and aerial photographs generally provide enough information to complete the basic wetland survey. However, a full wetland delineation survey following the US Army Corps of Engineers standards, including soil testing, may be required when the boundaries of the wetlands are not easily discernable.

This section of the report should also include the following:

- Discuss any significant limitations to each of the surveys performed, such as timing, season or inability to access or observe portions of the property or observe adjacent properties. All reports should acknowledge the existence of time and seasonal variations such that not all species on the site would be detected.
- It may be necessary to include a map of the property depicting the areas surveyed. For example, some lands may not have been surveyed because access was denied. Where directed sensitive species surveys are required, portions of the property may not provide suitable habitat/conditions for the species. A map shall be included when transects, quadrat sampling or sample points are used.
- This section shall include a numbered table listing the dates, times and weather conditions (as applicable) as well as the biologist(s) and any applicable permit numbers performing each survey.

1.4 Environmental Setting

Describe the physical characteristics, such as topography, elevation, climate, water resources and soil types. Briefly describe the general vicinity in terms of type and density of development and infrastructure. Specify public and private ownership of land in the vicinity, particularly for preserved lands. Describe any preserved lands adjacent or contiguous with the site. Describe the existing land uses on site and on surrounding lands, including unauthorized activities.

1.4.1 Regional Context

Provide a general overview of the following, as applicable. This section is not intended to provide detailed analysis of habitats, corridors, etc., as that analysis is included in later sections.

- Location relative to approved or proposed conservation plans

- Adopted or proposed NCCP subareas
- NCCP designations (such as PAMA, BRCA, Take Authorized, etc.)
- Adjacent to preserved lands, national forests, BLM lands
- Jurisdictional waterways and watersheds
- The section should reference aerial photos as numbered figure(s) showing the relationship of the project site with surrounding lands.

1.4.2 *Habitat Types/Vegetation Communities*

Describe each vegetation community identified on the property, addressing the following information. This section shall include a numbered table containing acreages.

- Reference the modified Holland code classification system as modified by Oberbauer (Table 4 in the Guidelines for Determining Significance) for each vegetation community.
- List the dominant (indicator) species present.
- Describe the quality of the habitat in general, including the level of previous disturbance.
- Describe the species abundance, composition and diversity in terms of vegetative structure.
- When applicable, provide the sensitivity level (i.e. Tier level in MSCP) of each habitat type.
- Discuss the conservation value of each habitat type in terms of regional and local importance relative to other areas of similar habitat off-site.
- Discuss whether the habitat type is considered [RPO Sensitive Habitat Lands, discuss the habitat tier \(if MSCP\), and discuss whether it is considered](#) sensitive by [the County](#), state or federal agencies, as defined by these requirements.
- Describe any unique habitat types and/or physical features of the land that occur on-site. Unique habitats are generally those considered rare due to physical constraints, such as soil type or topography, or those habitats created by unusual circumstances. Examples of unique habitats include vernal pools, gabbro-based or rare successional habitat communities. Unique habitats may also be defined by a defined physical or biological habitat component providing a specialized function for a specific limited distribution species such as butterfly hill-topping or a heron rookery. Unique features include any physical characteristic that might have unusual or exceptional biological value such as cliff faces, rock outcrops, sandstone bluffs, stream banks and bars. Unique features will often be geological in nature, but may also be the result of a water resource, soil, or manufactured structures functioning as roosts or rookeries.

1.4.3 *Flora*

Provide a general overview of the types of plant species identified on the site. For example, determine whether the majority of the plant species are non-native, disturbance-related or natives generally found in more pristine environments. Briefly list the more common plant species identified. A complete list of all plant species

identified on the site must be attached to the report, including the common name, scientific name and the vegetation community in which the plant species was identified.

1.4.4 Fauna

Format and discussion of fauna shall follow the instructions in Section 1.4.3. This section shall discuss large mammal use of the site, as well as its use for migratory birds and raptor foraging and/or nesting.

1.4.5 Sensitive Plant Species

The report must address all sensitive plant species that occur or have a high probability of occurring on the site or on land immediately adjacent to the site. This section should discuss the results of any directed surveys or habitat assessments.

Sensitive species are those considered sensitive by the County of San Diego, or any State or Federal agency. Potential to occur is derived from locality, known populations, soil or habitat types, elevation and a number of other factors.

The report must provide a table listing any sensitive species detected or having potential to be present, including its conservation status, preferred habitat (i.e. vegetation, soil, elevation range, etc.) and whether the species was detected on the site. This table shall be included as an appendix to the report. For species not detected, the table must include an evaluation of the potential for the species to be present currently or in the future and the probable reason why the species was not detected during the survey.

The report text must also contain a separate discussion for each sensitive species identified onsite or having a high potential to be present onsite. For each species, provide the number, density and location of individuals on the site (refer to *Section 1.3* for methods of measurement). The report ~~should~~ shall also discuss the local and regional significance of the population found on the site. For each sensitive species identified, a Natural Diversity Database Form must be completed with one copy sent to the California Department of Fish and Game and one copy attached to the final report.

1.4.6 Sensitive Wildlife Species

Format and discussion of sensitive wildlife species shall follow the instructions in *Section 1.4.5*. Sensitive species are those considered sensitive by the County of San Diego, or any State or Federal agency.

1.4.7 Wetlands/Jurisdictional Waters

Describe any wetland resources and jurisdictional waters identified on the site. Provide an estimate of acreage classified as County, State and/or Federal wetlands and jurisdictional waters along with an explanation as to how the boundaries were delineated. Include a brief list of the dominant plant and wildlife species present. Describe the quality of the wetland habitat in terms of disturbance, canopy cover, species diversity and connectivity to off-site habitat. Discuss the wetland's local and regional importance.

Discuss the wetland functions and values, and include a description of the habitats' location relative to hydrologic features (*i.e.*, what is downstream from the waterway). Wetland function refers to biophysical benefits, such as groundwater recharge and discharge, flood control, flow alteration, sediment stabilization, erosion control, toxicant retention, nutrient removal and cycling, and wildlife habitat for diversity and abundance. Wetland value refers to anthropomorphic benefits such as commercial enterprise, recreation and waste assimilation, and non-market values such as aesthetics, uniqueness and heritage.

1.4.8 *Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors*

Describe the extent of habitat connectivity between on and off-site lands. Provide a general description of any connection that exists, including estimated acreage and habitat types. Since indirect habitat connectivity is often very important, especially in more urbanized area, discuss the project site relative to surrounding areas that might serve as an island or "stepping-stone"/archipelago connection. When habitat connectivity exists between on and off-site areas, list the species that are likely to use the connection.

Discuss whether the connectivity creates a block of habitat with one or more of the following values:

- A core area of habitat suitable for resident populations
- A local wildlife corridor
- A block of habitat within a larger regional linkage

This section must also discuss wildlife corridors and linkages. Include a separate discussion of local wildlife corridors and regional linkages, addressing the presence or absence of both. Corridors are generally local pathways connecting short distances usually covering one or two main types of vegetation communities. Linkages are landscape level connections between very large core areas and generally span several thousand feet and cover multiple habitat types. Regional linkages have been identified on the MSCP Subarea Plan maps. Outside MSCP, regional vegetation maps and aerial photos may be used to evaluate the potential for a linkage.

When discussing wildlife corridors and linkages, describe the topography, habitat connectivity (direct or indirect), and vegetative cover. Discuss whether linear

features, such as watercourses, ridges or valleys, are present. If a corridor is present, provide widths, lengths and describe existing adjacent land uses. List the types of species that are likely to use the corridor. Describe any existing development or circumstance that might hinder existing corridors or prevent future connections from being formed.

1.5 Applicable Regulations

Briefly detail the County, State and Federal environmental regulations that apply to the project. Discuss permitting requirements such as species “take” permits, consultations, and wetland/waters permits. If consultations have occurred or permits obtained, discuss in this section.

2.0 PROJECT EFFECTS

This section shall summarize [direct and indirect](#) biological effects anticipated as a result of the proposed action, including but not limited to construction activities, post-construction impacts and off-site impacts. Do not discuss the significance of effects in this section. Significance determinations are discussed in later sections.

For habitats/vegetation communities, including wetlands and jurisdictional waters, summarize the acreages in a numbered table, generally following the example below. The table shall include all habitats/vegetation communities on site, including those that are not impacted or do not require mitigation. For species impacts, summarize the anticipated loss of sensitive plant and wildlife populations or individuals. Summarize any impacts to wildlife corridors, linkages and wildlife nursery sites.

[Also discuss “impact neutral” areas that are not considered impacted, but cannot be credited toward mitigation requirements \(e.g., wetlands and wetland buffers, and circumstances discussed in the Biological Report Format and Content Requirements, section 4.2\).](#)

Table X. Sample, Habitat/Vegetation Communities and Impacts

Habitat / Vegetation Community	Existing (acres) ¹	Impacts (acres) ¹	Offsite Impacts (acres) ²	Impact Neutral (acres) ³
TOTAL				

¹ An estimate of the on-site acreage, generally rounded to the nearest tenth of an acre. For wetlands and vernal pools, the acreage may be presented in square footage or hundredths/thousandths of an acre.

² Include a column for offsite impact acreage, if the project will impact offsite biological resources.

³ Include a column for impact neutral acreage, if applicable. For example, all wetlands and wetland buffers shall be counted as “impact neutral.”

3.0 SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

3.1 Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

The project would have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on one or more species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Any of the following conditions would be considered significant:

- A. The project would impact one or more individuals of a species listed as federally or state endangered or threatened.
- B. The project would impact the survival of a local population of ~~the regional long-term survival of any~~ County Group A or B plant species, or a County Group I animal species, or a species listed as a state Species of Special Concern.
- C. The project would impact the regional long-term survival of a County Group C or D plant species or a County Group II animal species.
- D. The project may impact arroyo toad aestivation or breeding habitat.
- E. The project would impact golden eagle habitat.
- F. The project would result in a loss of functional foraging habitat for raptors.
- G. The project would increase noise and/or nighttime lighting to a level above ambient proven to adversely affect sensitive species.
- H. The project would impact the viability of a core wildlife area, defined as a large block of habitat (typically 500 acres or more not limited to project boundaries, though smaller areas with particularly valuable resources may also be considered a core wildlife area) that supports a viable population of a sensitive wildlife species or an area that supports multiple wildlife species.
- I. The project would increase human access or predation or competition from domestic animals, pests or exotic species to levels that would adversely affect sensitive species.
- J. The project would impact nesting success of sensitive animals (as listed in the Guidelines for Determining Significance) through grading, clearing, fire fuel modification, and/or noise generating activities such as construction.

3.2 Analysis of Project Effects

Using the guidelines in *Section 3.1*, discuss the significance of any potential direct impacts to sensitive species identified on the site. Impacts are expected when a plant species was identified outside of areas proposed for preservation, or a wildlife species was identified as nesting, foraging or otherwise occurring in areas outside of the land proposed for preservation. Provide numbers of individuals and relative percentage of the population that will be impacted. Refer to *Section 1.3* for methods by which to measure population size and density. The analysis must make a

conclusion, based on the significance guidelines, whether or not these impacts are significant.

Guidelines that do not apply to the proposed action shall be listed with a brief explanation of why the guideline does not apply. For example, “The proposed project will not result in significant impacts under the following guidelines for the following reasons:

- 3.1.A. No state or federally listed species would be impacted by the project.
- 3.1.D. The site contains no habitat suitable for the arroyo toad.
- 3.1.E. No golden eagles are on site or within 4,000 feet of the site.”

3.3 Cumulative Impact Analysis

A reasonable list of cumulative projects should be compiled based on past, present, and future projects that could also cumulatively contribute to the project’s significant impacts. For each potential impact, a study area must be defined. The consultant, in consultation with County staff, must determine the extent of the area used in the cumulative analysis. The area should be defined by considering the following factors and others, as appropriate: land use, MSCP or HCP boundaries, species ranges, habitats, site conditions, topography, natural history of the species, best available scientific literature, etc., using best professional judgment. Analyze the significance of the cumulative impact to special status species. The consultant shall determine whether the project makes a cumulatively considerable contribution to special status species, based on a project-specific analysis and the factors described above. When the project’s contribution to the cumulative impact is significant, the analysis shall discuss mitigating effects of existing regional conservation plans if applicable. Mitigation may also include a reduction in the project’s contribution to the loss, or a specific on- or off-site mitigation plan.

For larger projects and Environmental Impact Reports, the analysis of potential cumulative impacts should be structured as follows: “The cumulative projects study area was chosen because xxx. The cumulative projects will impact xxx (sample: xxx individuals or xxx percent). This is/is not significant because xxx.” (If significant), “The project’s contribution is xxx percent of the total cumulative impact. This is/is not considerable because xxx.” For smaller-scale projects and those covered by an approved multi-species conservation plan, other formats for cumulative impact analysis may be appropriate. However, a project may have significant cumulative effects notwithstanding the project’s conformance with a regulatory program or existing mitigation plan such as a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) or Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP). [CEQA requires an appropriate cumulative study area \(geographic scope\) when determining which projects to include in a cumulative analysis. If the appropriate study area is entirely within the MSCP, a project may rely on the MSCP to determine that the project’s impacts are not cumulatively considerable. If, however, a project is located on the periphery of the MSCP, or the project lies both within and outside the MSCP, the](#)

cumulative study area must extend beyond the boundaries of the MSCP as necessary to address the appropriate resource(s). Cumulative mitigation measures should only address significant cumulative impacts.

3.4 Mitigation Measures and Design Considerations

Provide brief descriptions of proposed mitigation measures and design considerations. Refer to Attachment A of these guidelines for the County's Typical Mitigation Measures. For each measure, state the impact being mitigated. Some mitigation measures will require additional details, such as a Resource Management Plan (RMP)/Habitat Management Plan (HMP).

3.5 Conclusions

For each significant impact, determine if the proposed mitigation measures have reduced the significance level to "less than significant" in accordance with the stated Significance Guidelines.

4.0 RIPARIAN HABITAT OR SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITY

The format of the biology reports is based on the CEQA Guidelines, which discusses riparian and sensitive habitats in a separate section from wetlands. Jurisdictional wetlands are discussed in *Section 5.0*.

4.1 Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

The project would have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Any of the following conditions would be considered significant:

- A. Project-related construction, grading, clearing, construction or other activities would temporarily or permanently remove sensitive native or naturalized habitat (as listed in Table 5, excluding those without a mitigation ratio) on or off the project site.
- B. Any of the following will occur to or within jurisdictional wetlands and/or riparian habitats as defined by ACOE, CDFG and the County of San Diego: removal of vegetation; grading; obstruction or diversion of water flow; adverse change in velocity, siltation, volume of flow, or runoff rate; placement of fill; placement of structures; construction of a road crossing; placement of culverts or other underground piping; any disturbance of the substratum; and/or any activity that may cause an adverse change in native species composition, diversity and abundance.
- C. The project would draw down the groundwater table to the detriment of

groundwater-dependent habitat, typically a drop of 3 feet or more from historical low groundwater levels.

- D. The project would increase human access or competition from domestic animals, pests or exotic species to levels proven to adversely affect sensitive habitats.
- E. The project does not include a wetland buffer adequate to protect the functions and values of existing wetlands.

4.2 Analysis of Project Effects

Using the guidelines in *Section 4.1*, discuss the significance of all direct and indirect vegetation and habitat impacts that might occur as a result of the proposed project. The evaluation should consider the type and density of proposed development, potential uses within the open space and basic project design. Along with each impact, provide a determination as to whether the impact is significant and whether mitigation may be applied to reduce the significance. The determination of significance should be accompanied by a brief explanation as to how the conclusion was reached.

All potential impacts resulting from any part of the project must be included, even if the impacts are temporary, off-site or may not occur until a future phase of the project, such as grading following a Tentative Map. The impact analysis shall be separated according to the significance guidelines listed in *Section 4.1*. Guidelines that do not apply to the proposed action shall be listed with a brief explanation of why the guideline does not apply.

Habitat that will potentially be removed as a result of grading or clearing associated with the project is considered impacted. For most discretionary actions, any habitat not protected within open space easements is considered impacted since few restrictions apply to prevent future clearing. Use permits and other types of actions tied directly to plot plans may, in some cases, consider impacts only to that land specifically proposed for development. In all cases, fire fuel modification and vegetation management requirements, and off-site improvements are part of the project and are considered direct impacts.

The area within 100 feet of an existing permitted and occupied structure shall be considered “impact neutral.” For this paragraph, structure is defined as a residence and attached garage, building or related facility that is designed primarily for human habitation or buildings designed specifically to house farm animals. Decking, fences, sheds, gazebos, and detached garages less than 250 square feet are not considered structures for the purposes of this paragraph.

When a project proposes a subdivision that will result in [one or more](#) residential lots larger than 15 acres ~~each~~, the applicant may choose to either consider the whole site impacted, or to limit the impact areas. For these large lot subdivisions, the [following guidance applies](#) ~~options are~~:

1. Typical subdivision processing. The applicant for the proposed map may choose to consider all land not included within an open space easement as impacted. By doing this during the map phase, impacts would be assessed and mitigation proposed for the entire site. The future parcel owner would still be required to obtain permits for new discretionary actions not foreseen in the map phase (such as additional fire fuel modification and vegetation management, agricultural clearing, and clearing for accessory structures), but the environmental review process for those future discretionary actions would be shortened.
2. Using “impact neutral” designations. The applicant may choose to have just 5 acres per new lot considered in the impact and mitigation analysis. The proposed map must show where these 5 acres would likely be cleared on each lot and those would be the areas analyzed. The environmental documents would state that any remaining areas not included within open space were considered “impact neutral” for purposes of analysis, meaning that the area is not considered impacted or used for mitigation credit. Any future clearing within the “impact neutral” areas would require appropriate permits and full environmental review.

The analysis must make a conclusion, based on the significance guidelines, whether or not these impacts are significant.

4.3 Cumulative Impact Analysis

Format and discussion shall follow the instructions in *Section 3.3*. For habitats and vegetation communities, the study area may be the County defined “ecoregion” or other applicable area. Format and discussion shall follow the instructions in *Section 3.3*.

4.4 Mitigation Measures and Design Considerations

Provide brief descriptions of proposed mitigation measures and design considerations. Refer to Attachment A of these guidelines for the County’s Typical Mitigation Measures. For each measure, state the impact being mitigated. Some mitigation measures may require additional details, such as:

1. Revegetation Plans – a Final Plan may be required as a condition of the project, to be completed at a later date (i.e. prior to grading or finalizing the map). The biological report shall provide a Conceptual Revegetation Plan in accordance with the County’s Guidelines.
2. Resource Management Plans (RMP) (formerly known as Habitat Management Plans (HMPs) – a Final Plan may be required as a condition of the project, to be completed at a later date (i.e. prior to grading or finalizing the map). The biological report shall provide a Conceptual Resource Management Plan in accordance with the County’s Guidelines.

4.5 Conclusions

Format and discussion shall follow the instructions in Section 3.5.

5.0 *JURISDICTIONAL WETLANDS AND WATERWAYS*

The format of the biology reports is based on the CEQA Guidelines, which discusses riparian and sensitive habitats in a separate section from wetlands. Riparian habitat is discussed in *Section 4.0*.

5.1 Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

The project would have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption or other means.

Refer to Section 4.1 guidelines above.

5.2 Analysis of Project Effects

Describe all impacts to Federal, State, and County wetlands and/or jurisdictional waters. The report shall state whether impacts would require State or Federal wetland permits or Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) permits. The analysis must make a conclusion, based on the significance guidelines, whether or not these impacts are significant. Note: For projects subject to the RPO, avoidance of wetlands and wetland buffers is required.

5.3 *Cumulative Impact Analysis*

Format and discussion shall follow the instructions in Section 3.3.

5.4 Mitigation Measures and Design Considerations

Format and discussion shall follow the instructions in Section 3.4. Note that wetlands and wetland buffers that are required to be preserved by the Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO) are considered “impact neutral” and cannot be credited toward mitigation requirements.

5.5 Conclusions

Format and discussion shall follow the instructions in Sections 3.5.

6.0 *WILDLIFE MOVEMENT AND NURSERY SITES*

6.1 Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

The project would interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

Any of the following conditions would be considered significant:

- A. The project would prevent wildlife access to foraging habitat, breeding habitat, water sources, or other areas necessary for their reproduction.
- B. The project would substantially interfere with connectivity between blocks of habitat, or would potentially block or substantially interfere with a local or regional wildlife corridor or linkage.
- C. The project would create artificial wildlife corridors that do not follow natural movement patterns.
- D. The project would increase noise and/or nighttime lighting in a wildlife corridor or linkage to levels proven to affect the behavior of the animals identified in a site-specific analysis of wildlife movement.
- E. The project does not maintain an adequate width for an existing wildlife corridor or linkage and/or would further constrain an already narrow corridor through activities such as (but not limited to) reduction of corridor width, removal of available vegetative cover, placement of incompatible uses adjacent to it, and placement of barriers in the movement path.
- F. The project does not maintain adequate visual continuity (i.e., long lines-of-site) within wildlife corridors or linkage.

6.2 Analysis of Project Effects

Using the guidelines in Section 6.1, discuss the project site in terms of existing wildlife corridors and linkages and wildlife nursery sites. Discuss corridor/linkage functions and what species are likely to be using the site for movement and breeding activities. Analyze whether there will be impacts to existing habitat connectivity both on- and off-site, or to a native wildlife nursery sites, based on the likely functions that will be retained after project implementation. Provide details such as extent of impact and whether connectivity and nursery sites might be retained elsewhere.

This section must also discuss the potential for increased wildlife road fatalities due to increased project-related traffic. Analyze the potential impacts, including the effects of corridor constriction or elimination from the project itself and/or from any proposed barriers or crossings. Include details regarding corridor widths and lengths that will result from the project. The analysis must make a conclusion, based on the significance guidelines, whether or not these impacts are significant.

Guidelines that do not apply to the proposed action shall be listed with a brief explanation of why the guideline does not apply.

6.3 Cumulative Impact Analysis

Format and discussion shall follow the instructions in Section 3.3.

6.4 Mitigation Measures and Design Considerations

Format and discussion shall follow the instructions in Section 3.4.

6.5 Conclusions

Format and discussion shall follow the instructions in Section 3.5.

7.0 LOCAL POLICIES, ORDINANCES, ADOPTED PLANS

7.1 Guideline for the Determination of Significance

The project would conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan.

Any of the following conditions would be considered significant:

- A. For lands outside of the MSCP, the project would impact coastal sage scrub (CSS) vegetation in excess of the County's 5% habitat loss threshold as defined by the Southern California Coastal Sage Scrub Natural Communities Conservation Planning Process (NCCP) Guidelines.
- B. The project would preclude or prevent the preparation of the subregional Natural Communities Conservation Planning Process (NCCP). For example, the project proposes development within areas that have been identified by the County or resource agencies as critical to future habitat preserves.
- C. The project will impact any amount of wetlands or sensitive habitat lands as outlined in the Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO).
- D. The project would not minimize and/or mitigate coastal sage scrub habitat loss in accordance with Section 4.3 of the Natural Communities Conservation Planning Process (NCCP) Guidelines.
- E. The project does not conform to the goals and requirements as outlined in any applicable Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), Habitat Management Plan (HMP), Special Area Management Plan (SAMP), Watershed Plan, or similar regional planning effort.
- F. For lands within the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP), the project would not minimize impacts to Biological Resource Core Areas (BRCAs), as defined in the Biological Mitigation Ordinance (BMO).
- G. The project would preclude connectivity between areas of high habitat values, as defined by the Southern California Coastal Sage Scrub Natural Communities Conservation Planning Process (NCCP) Guidelines.

- H. The project does not maintain existing movement corridors and/or habitat linkages as defined by the Biological Mitigation Ordinance (BMO).
- I. The project does not avoid impacts to MSCP narrow endemic species and would impact core populations of narrow endemics.
- J. The project would reduce the likelihood of survival and recovery of listed species in the wild.
- K. The project would result in the killing of migratory birds or destruction of active migratory bird nests and/or eggs (Migratory Bird Treaty Act).
- L. The project would result in the take of eagles, eagle eggs or any part of an eagle (Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act).

7.2 **Analysis of Project Effects**

Using the guidelines in Section 6.1, discuss how the project will comply with local policies, ordinances, and plans. Guidelines that do not apply to the proposed action shall be listed with a brief explanation of why the guideline does not apply.

7.3 **Cumulative Impact Analysis**

Format and discussion shall follow the instructions in Section 3.3.

7.4 **Mitigation Measures and Design Considerations**

Format and discussion shall follow the instructions in Section 3.4.

7.5 **Conclusions**

Format and discussion shall follow the instructions in Section 3.5.

8.0 **SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION**

This section shall provide a brief text summary of project impacts and mitigation. The report shall include a numbered table with habitat acreages, generally following the example below. The table shall include all habitats/vegetation communities on site, including those that are not impacted or do not require mitigation. Use the sample table provided below.

**Table X.X.
Habitat/Vegetation Communities, Impacts, Mitigation**

Habitat / Vegetation Community	Existing (acres) ¹	Impacts (acres) ₁	Offsite Impacts (acres) ₂	Mitigation Ratio	Mitigation Required (acres)	Preserved On-Site (acres) ¹	Impact Neutral (acres) ³	Off-Site Mitigation (acres)

Total								
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¹ An estimate of the on-site acreage, generally rounded to the nearest tenth of an acre. However, for wetlands and vernal pools, the acreage may be presented in square footage or hundredths/thousandths of an acre.

² Include a column for offsite column if the project will impact offsite resources.

³ Include a column for impact neutral acreage if applicable. For example, all wetlands and wetland buffers are counted as "impact neutral."

This section shall also provide a mitigation table that summarizes all mitigation measures and refers to the Guideline(s) that require each measure. Use the sample table provided below.

Table X.X.
Summary of Mitigation Measures

<u>Proposed Mitigation</u>	<u>Level of Significance After Mitigation</u>	<u>Guideline Number(s)</u>

9.0 REFERENCES

10.0 LIST OF PREPARERS AND PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS CONTACTED

Provide a list of preparers, noting each person included on the County list of approved consultants. Note that the principal author must be on the list or the report will not be accepted.

TECHNICAL APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

The Table of Contents shall list each document attached to the report in the order in which they are referenced in the report. The following documents must be included in the report, either in the text (if size is appropriate) or as an Attachment:

- A. Observed Species Lists, Flora and Fauna. A list of all species identified on the site, including the common name, scientific name and the vegetation community in which the species was identified.
- B. Potential Sensitive Species List, Flora and Fauna (format follows) to contain all sensitive species with the potential to reside, forage or otherwise use the site. The table will include the conservation status, preferred habitat (i.e. vegetation, soil, elevation range, etc.) and whether the species was detected on the site. For species not detected, the table will include a determination of the potential for the species to be present currently or in the future and factual basis for that determination (the probable reason why the species was not detected during the survey).
- C. A California Natural Diversity Database Form (CNDDDB) must be attached to the final report for each sensitive species that was identified on the site. A copy of the CNDDDB form shall also be sent to the CDFG.
- D. Biological Resource Map and project plot plan/map (if not clearly shown on the biological resource map), unless these are included as clear reduced figures elsewhere in the document (clear 11x17-inch maximum figures are preferred).
- E. Open Space Map and reduced copy of the Open Space Map to be included within the document (11x17 inch max), showing location of fencing and signage, if open space easements are proposed.
- F. Signed survey reports for all directed or focused surveys. When applicable, a copy of the survey results letter sent to USFWS should be included. Signed survey reports may be bound separately from the main report to eliminate the need to resubmit the signed survey report if further revisions to the Biological Resource Report are necessary.
- G. Vicinity and USGS topographic maps if not included elsewhere in the document.
- H. Any other documents necessary to supplement the information provided within the biological report.

Sensitive Species Table Format. The County will provide a list of sensitive plant and animal species with the potential to exist on the project site. The report shall

include each sensitive species on the list in table form documenting its sensitivity status (County, State and Federal, as appropriate), its preferred habitat and whether it was detected on-site by direct or indirect evidence. If the species was not detected, the table shall address its potential for occurrence (habitat assessment) with facts to support each conclusion. The following table shows the headings for the table that can be prepared in portrait or landscape format.

Scientific Name and Common Name	Sensitivity Code & Status (Federal, State, County, other)	Habitat Preference/ Requirements	Verified On Site Yes/No (direct / indirect evidence)	Potential to Occur On Site (Observed or L/M/H/U)	Factual basis for determination of occurrence potential

Sensitivity codes shall be defined at the end of the table.

2.3 Biological Resource Letter Report

A letter report may be adequate to document biological resources if the project site is small and/or the site has limited biological resources. Based on the information provided in the biological letter report, DPLU may require additional focused surveys and/or a Full Biological Resource Report.

2.3.1 Outline

The following outline should be followed when preparing a Biological Resources Letter Report.

<u>Biological Resource Letter Report Outline</u>
Summary
Introduction, Project Description, Location, Setting
Regional Context
Habitats / Vegetation Communities
Special Status Species
Jurisdictional Wetlands and Waterways
Other Unique Features / Resources
Significance of Project Impacts and Proposed Mitigation
Cumulative Impacts
References
Preparer and Persons/Organizations Contacted
Attachments

2.3.2 Contents

Although a cover page is not required for a letter report, the first page of the report shall contain the following information:

- Project common name;
- Project numbers (i.e. TM, ZAP, etc.) including the environmental log number (ER);

- Date (original letter report date plus all revisions;
- Name of County Approved CEQA Consultant preparing document, firm name (if applicable) and address;
- Signature of County Approved CEQA Consultant;
- Project proponent's name and address;
- The following statement: "Prepared for The County of San Diego."

Summary

Provide a brief summary of the project, the biological resources present on the site, potential impacts and proposed mitigation. No new information should be provided in the summary that is not further explained elsewhere in the document. The purpose of the summary is to provide a quick reference for the public and decision-makers. Therefore, the language should be less technical than that used in the remainder of the document.

Introduction, Project Description, Location, Setting

Completely describe the proposed project, including all off-site impacts and fire fuel modification and vegetation management requirements. Provide a brief summary of the project location, survey dates and times, and biological resources present on the site.

Regional Context

Provide a general overview of the following, as applicable:

- Location relative to approved or proposed conservation plans
- Adopted or proposed NCCP subareas
- NCCP designations (such as PAMA, BRCA, Take Authorized, etc.)
- Adjacent to preserved lands, national forests, BLM lands
- Jurisdictional waterways and watersheds
- The section should reference aerial photos as numbered figure(s) showing the relationship of the project site with surrounding lands.

Habitats / Vegetation Communities

- Estimate acres present for each habitat type / vegetation community, rounded to the nearest tenth of an acre. However, for sensitive habitats (such as wetlands, jurisdictional waters, and vernal pools), the acreage may be presented in square footage or hundredths/thousandths of an acre.
- List dominant (indicator) species present.
- Describe habitat quality, including the level of previous disturbance.
- Discuss species abundance, composition and diversity in terms of vegetative structure and wildlife present.

- Discuss whether the habitat type is considered RPO Sensitive Habitat Lands, discuss the habitat tier (if MSCP), and discuss whether it is considered sensitive by state or federal agencies, as defined by these requirements. Determine and factually support the habitat sensitivity level (i.e. Tier level in MSCP) for each habitat type.
- Discuss the conservation value of each habitat type in terms of regional and local importance relative to other areas of similar habitat off-site.

Special Status Species

- Address all sensitive species with potential to occur on the site or on land immediately adjacent to the site.
- Discuss large mammal use
- Discuss migratory bird and raptor foraging and/or nesting.
- When a sensitive species is identified on a property, provide the number and density of individuals. It may also be necessary to provide these measurements for off-site areas in order to fully determine the true size and extent of the local population. When feasible, the actual number of individuals should be counted in the field. When a plant species covers several acres (3 acres or more), the number and density may be estimated using a quadrat sampling method. When the plant species is a ground-cover variety or individuals are not easily discernable from one another, acreage may be used as a measurement and the density presented as a percentage cover per acre. For animal species, the number of individuals should be approximated based on actual sightings and other available signs, such as fecal deposits, tracks and nests or burrows. The method by which the number of individuals and density of a species is determined must be described in the biological report.
- Generally, if protocol or focused surveys are required a Full Biological Report is required. However, if Protocol Surveys are required with a Letter Report, summarize the report conclusions and attach the Protocol Survey report. If focused surveys (non-protocol surveys) are required, the Letter Report shall present the field methods and results. Focused surveys must be done by biologist(s) with demonstrable knowledge in field detection of the subject species. Protocol surveys for federally listed species must follow USFWS protocol. Permit numbers for biologists performing these focused surveys must be provided and field notes for each survey must be attached to the biological report. All point locations and inferred territories of these species must be included on the Biological Resources Map. For species too numerous to map or where exact locations are not known, a notation on the map will suffice.

Jurisdictional Wetlands and Waterways

- Describe all wetland and water resources found on the site.
- Estimate acres classified as County, State and/or Federal wetlands along with an explanation as to how the boundaries were delineated.

- Include a brief list of the dominant plant and wildlife species present that were either detected or likely using the site.
- Describe wetland habitat quality including disturbance, canopy cover, species diversity and connectivity to off-site habitat.
- Discuss the wetland in terms of local and regional importance.
- Wetlands must be accurately plotted on the Biological Resources Map.

Other Unique Features/Resources

Include a brief description of any unique features/resources, including, but not limited to:

- Wildlife Corridors and Linkages
- Topography/Connectivity
- Regional or Local Setting
- Other biological functions such as foraging, hill-topping, roosting, rock outcroppings
- Sensitive soils

Significance of Project Impacts and Proposed Mitigation

The letter report shall discuss all significant impacts to biological resources, and shall propose applicable and feasible mitigation measures that will reduce impacts to less than significant. Include a table with habitat acreages, generally following the example below. The table shall include all habitats/vegetation communities on site, including those that are not impacted or do not require mitigation.

**Table X.X. Sample
Habitat/Vegetation Communities, Impacts, Mitigation**

Habitat / Vegetation Community	Existing (acres) ¹	Impacts (acres) ₁	Offsite Impacts (acres) ₂	Mitigation Ratio	Mitigation Required (acres)	Preserved On-Site (acres) ¹	Impact Neutral (acres) ³	Off-Site Mitigation (acres)
Total								

¹ An estimate of the on-site acreage, generally rounded to the nearest tenth of an acre. However, for wetlands and vernal pools, the acreage may be presented in square footage or hundredths/thousandths of an acre.

² Include a column for offsite impacts if the project will impact offsite resources.

³ Include a column for impact neutral acreage if applicable. For example, all wetlands and wetland buffers are counted as "impact neutral."

Cumulative Impacts

A reasonable list of cumulative projects should be compiled based on past, present, and future projects that could also cumulatively contribute to the project's significant biological impacts. Analyze the significance of the cumulative impact. Determine

whether the project makes a cumulatively considerable contribution to the impact. The report should address each resource in terms of potential cumulative impacts. When the project's contribution to the cumulative impact is significant, the analysis should include a discussion of mitigating effects of existing regional conservation plans if applicable. Mitigation may also include a reduction in the project's contribution, or a specific on- or off-site mitigation plan.

[For smaller-scale projects and those covered by an approved multi-species conservation plan, other formats for cumulative impact analysis may be appropriate. However, a project may have significant cumulative effects notwithstanding the project's conformance with a regulatory program or existing mitigation plan such as a Habitat Conservation Plan \(HCP\) or Natural Communities Conservation Plan \(NCCP\). For more details regarding cumulative impact analyses, refer to section 3.3 of the content guidelines for Full Biological Resource Reports.](#)

References

Preparer and Persons/Organizations Contacted

Biological Resource Letter Reports must be prepared by a County-approved consultant.

Attachments

The following documents should be included in the report, either in the text (if size is appropriate) or as an Attachment:

- Observed Species Lists, Flora and Fauna. A list of all species identified on the site, including the common name, scientific name and the vegetation community in which the species was identified.
- Potential Sensitive Species List, Flora and Fauna (format follows) to contain all sensitive species with the potential to reside, forage or otherwise use the site. The County will provide a list of sensitive plant and animal species with the potential to exist on the project site. The report shall include each sensitive species on the list in table form documenting its sensitivity status (County, State and Federal, as appropriate), its preferred habitat and whether it was detected on-site by direct or indirect evidence. If the species was not detected, the table shall address its potential for occurrence (habitat assessment) with facts to support each conclusion. Sensitivity codes shall be defined at the end of the table.
- California Natural Diversity Database Form(s) (CNDDB) must be attached to the final report for each sensitive species identified on site. A copy of the CNDDB Form shall also be sent to the CDFG.
- Biological Resources Map including a reduced copy within the letter report.
- Open Space Map including a reduced copy of the Open Space Map in the report, if Open Space is proposed.

- Signed survey reports for all directed or focused surveys. When applicable, a copy of the survey results letter sent to USFWS should be included. Signed survey reports may be bound separately from the letter report to eliminate the need to resubmit the signed survey report if further revisions to the Biological Letter Report are necessary.
- Vicinity and USGS topographic maps and aerial photograph if not included elsewhere in the document.
- Any other documents necessary to supplement the information provided within the biological letter report.

3.0 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE MAPPING GUIDELINES

3.1 Extent of Mapping Required

3.1.1 Project Boundary

Biological Resource mapping must include the entire project parcel(s) plus 100 feet onto adjoining properties. In rare cases where a project only affects a small portion of a large parcel, the need to map the entire parcel may be waived. If you wish to pursue this waiver, contact the Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU) Project Manager.

3.1.2 Off-site Improvement Areas

Any required off-site improvements (e.g., road improvements, fire fuel modification and vegetation management requirements, utility extensions, stormwater Best Management Practices, etc.) must be mapped in accordance with these requirements. Mapping should include maximum area necessary to complete the improvement

3.1.3 Off-site Biological Mitigation Areas

If off-site biological mitigation is proposed and the off-site area is not part of a formally adopted mitigation bank, the proposed areas must be mapped in accordance with these requirements.

3.2 Map Layout

3.2.1 Base Map

The Biological Resource Map must be completed using a base map that includes:

- The most recent project plot plan including all existing and proposed easements for utilities, roads, drainage, etc.
- The proposed maximum limits of disturbance for the project (on and off site); including grading, fire fuel modification and vegetation management requirements, septic systems, wells, construction staging areas, road improvements, drainage improvements, etc.
- Fire fuel modification and vegetation management requirements including fuel modification adjacent to roads.
- Proposed Biological Open Space/Conservation Easements.
- Limited Building Zone Easements. These easements must be located adjacent to all biological open space easements to prevent fire fuel modification and vegetation management within biological open space areas. They should be a minimum of 100 feet in width unless an extended or reduced width is approved by the appropriate fire authorities and supported by the Fire Protection Plan for the project (where applicable). See Attachment B of these guidelines for a visual depiction of Limited Building Zone Easements.

- Existing Easements. All existing easements must be shown and labeled. This includes previously dedicated biological open space easements, steep slope easements, road easements, utility easements, etc.
- Topography (County topographic data is sufficient).
- Major roads and major road names.
- Both proposed (solid lines) and existing (dashed lines) parcel/lot lines.
- Assessor Parcel Numbers
- North arrow
- Bar Scale

NOTE: If the scale and the quantity of information on the map render the map illegible or overly complex, the map scale should be reduced or the information should be divided between the base map and an “overlay” map.

3.2.2 Scale

Acceptable scales are 1" = 20' through 1" = 200'. The maximum allowable size of the map sheet is 48" x 36". Each map shall include a bar and number scale. Regardless of the scale used, the map must be legible. Note: Scale should be appropriate to fit entire project on one sheet and to clearly view the resources and legend. For extremely large project sites that would not fit on one sheet at the above scales, coordinate with the County Staff Biologist to determine appropriate scale.

3.2.3 Multiple Sheet Maps

Biological Resource Maps must be one contiguous sheet of the entire project parcel(s) unless, given the scale and legibility limitations described above, a project's size prohibits the use of a single sheet map using the acceptable scale (a maximum project parcel dimension of approximately 9000' x 6500'). In the rare occasion that the map cannot be placed on a single sheet, a multiple sheet map is acceptable. All multiple sheet maps must have a larger scale, single-sheet index map showing the relationship of all detail sheets. Each detail map sheet must meet all of the requirements listed in this document and be of a consistent scale.

3.2.4 Submittal Requirements

For initial and other draft submittals, three to five copies of the Biological Resource Map shall be submitted. The number of maps necessary at submittal will depend on whether consultation/meetings with the resource agencies will be required. Upon finalization, additional copies will be required based upon public review and/or public hearing requirements. With the final document, a digital version of the Biological Resource Map shall be submitted in accordance with DPLU Electronic Document Guidelines.

3.3 Habitat Identification

3.3.1 Required Habitat Classification System

All Biological Resource Maps and studies shall incorporate the modified Holland code classification system for vegetation communities. A Holland Classification must cover all areas on the project site and surrounding area. The map legend must reference both the Holland numeric code as well as the Holland vegetation community name.

[Habitat areas shall be clearly delineated on the Biological Resource Maps using either varying patterns or varying colors.](#)

The following references shall be used for vegetation:

- Holland, R. F., 1986, *Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California*. Nongame-Heritage Program, State of California, Department of Fish and Game, Sacramento, CA, 157 p.
- Oberbauer, T., 1996, *Terrestrial Vegetation Communities in San Diego County Based on Holland's Descriptions*, 6 p.

3.3.2 Mixtures of Habitat Components

Where vegetation contains a mixture of component and indicator species from two or more Holland vegetation communities, the indicator species that appear with the greatest vegetation coverage shall be used to identify the vegetation community.

3.3.3 Burned Habitat

Areas recovering from fire shall be mapped using the resurgent vegetation as indicators of the probable resultant habitat. When the fire is so recent that no new vegetation has emerged, historical evidence such as aerial photos and the County's vegetation mapping information shall be used to map the habitat that was burned.

3.3.4 Previously Graded/Cleared Lands:

- Unauthorized Grading/Clearing – Areas graded or cleared without a legal permit or authority shall be mapped as the vegetation type present prior to the unauthorized activity (forensic mapping) based on County records and regardless of the time that has lapsed. Historical evidence, such as aerial photography or the County's vegetation mapping information, shall be used to determine the habitat that once existed.
- Legal Clearing Related to Preparation of Land for Development – Areas legally graded or cleared in preparation for the proposed project shall also be mapped as the habitat that existed prior to the clearing unless previous environmental review

was conducted and appropriate mitigation applied. The California Environmental Quality Act requires assessment of the “whole of the proposed project” which includes activities completed in preparation for the project. Examples include geotechnical testing, septic testing, well drilling/testing, surveying and recent (less than 5 years prior to project application) clearing or grading (including agricultural clearing or grading) completed without a clear documented purpose. Historical evidence, such as aerial photography or the County’s vegetation mapping information shall be used to determine the habitat that once existed.

- Legal Clearing – Areas graded or cleared with legal authority (i.e. upon issuance of a County permit) that are not related to preparing the land for development may be mapped as the existing disturbed land, developed land, agriculture or other appropriate habitat type.

3.3.5 Additional Habitat Identification Information

While Holland gives information regarding habitat attributes, the following additional guidance shall be followed in determining the proper code for disturbed land, non-native grassland, agriculture, coastal sage-chaparral scrub, and native grassland classifications:

- Developed (Holland 12000) – Land that has been constructed upon or otherwise covered with a permanent unnatural surface shall be considered Developed. Areas where no natural land is evident due to a large amount of debris or other materials being placed upon it may also be considered Developed (i.e. car recycling plant, quarry, etc.).
- Disturbed Land (Holland 11300) – Disturbed land includes areas in which the vegetative cover comprises less than 10 percent of the surface area (disregarding natural rock outcrops) and where there is evidence of soil surface disturbance and compaction from previously legal human activity; or where the vegetative cover is greater than 10 percent, there is soil surface disturbance and compaction, and the presence of building foundations and debris (e.g., irrigation piping, fencing, old wells, abandoned farming or mining equipment) resulting from legal activities (as opposed to illegal dumping). Vegetation on disturbed land (if present) will have a high predominance of non-native and/or weedy species that are indicators of surface disturbance and soil compaction, such as Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), telegraph weed (*Heterotheca grandiflora*), horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*), and sow-thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*). Although non-native grasses may be present on disturbed land, they do not dominate the vegetative cover. Examples of disturbed land include the following activities, if preformed under legal means: recently graded firebreaks, graded construction pads, construction staging areas, off-road vehicle trails, and old homesites.
- Non-native grassland (Holland 42200) – Non-native grassland is a mixture of annual grasses and broad-leaved, herbaceous species. Annual species comprise from 50

percent to more than 90 percent of the vegetative cover, and most annuals are non-native species. Non-native grasses typically comprise at least 30 percent of the vegetation, although this number can be much higher in some years and lower in others, depending on land use and climatic conditions. Usually, the annual grasses are less than 1 m (3 ft) in height, and form a continuous or open cover. Emergent shrubs and trees may be present, but do not comprise more than 15 percent of the total vegetative cover. Characteristic non-native grassland species include foxtail chess (*Bromus madritensis* ssp. *rubens*), ripgut grass (*Bromus diandrus*), wild oats (*Avena* spp.), fescues (*Vulpia* spp.), red-stem filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), mustards (*Brassica* spp.), lupines (*Lupinus* spp.) and goldfields (*Lasthenia* spp.), among others. This definition is consistent with non-native grassland definitions in conservation plans adopted by other jurisdictions within San Diego County.

- Agriculture (Holland 18000-18320) – Agriculture refers to lands subject to routine and ongoing commercial operations associated with farm, grove, dairy or other agricultural businesses. Agriculture shall include: (1) The cultivation and tillage of the soil; crop rotation; fallowing for agricultural purposes; the production, cultivation, growing, replanting and harvesting of any agricultural commodity including viticulture, vermiculture, apiculture, or horticulture; (2) The raising of livestock, fur bearing animals, fish, or poultry, and dairying; (3) Any practices performed by a farmer on a farm as incident to or in conjunction with those farming or grove operations, including the preparation for market, delivery to storage or to market, or delivery to carriers for transportation to market; and (4) Ordinary pasture maintenance and renovation and dry land farming operations consistent with rangeland management and soil disturbance activities. All such activities must be consistent with the economics of commercial agricultural operations and other similar agricultural activities. Irrigation or disking alone does not indicate an improved pasture. Grazing land (“unimproved pastureland”) continues to retain the biological value of grassland and may not meet the Agriculture vegetation classification. Agricultural land left fallow may revert to non-native grassland habitat or other native/naturalized habitat. An assessment shall be made as to whether the land now supports native or naturalized habitat after an absence of active agricultural activity, such as seeding or harvesting for four or more years.
- Coastal sage-chaparral scrub – Coastal sage scrub and southern mixed chaparral are identified by the dominant indicator species present. In cases where the two habitats are co-dominant and at least 50% of the habitat is indicative of coastal sage scrub, then the habitat shall be labeled as “coastal sage-chaparral scrub”.
- Native Grassland – There is often a debate as to how to delineate native and non-native grassland, particularly when one often occurs as one or more patches within a larger expanse of the other. Native grassland (Holland 42100) should be identified when *Nassella* and other native herbs including *Sanicula*, *Sidalcea*, *Sisyrinchium*, *Eschscholzia* or *Lasthenia* are present. The percentage cover of Native species at any one time may be quite low. An area will qualify as Native Grassland if more than a 20% cover of native perennial species is present using a 1 x 1 meter quadrat.

3.4 Sensitive Species, Other Habitat Features and Wetland Mapping Requirements

3.4.1 Sensitive Species

Locations/areas of observed sensitive plant and animal species shall be identified on the biological resources map. Sensitive species locations/areas should not be delineated from, but included within the mapped habitat classification that surrounds the sensitive species locations/areas. For species too numerous to map or where exact locations are not known, a notation on the map will suffice.

3.4.2 Significant Habitat Features

Habitat features such as caves, rock outcroppings or cliff faces, shall be identified. It is understood that many of these features do not have a unique Holland Classification. Therefore, while these significant habitat feature areas must be included, a valid and appropriate Holland Classification must nonetheless identify all areas mapped. Habitat features should not be delineated from, but included within the mapped habitat that surrounds the feature (usually as some form of crosshatching).

3.4.3 Jurisdictional Wetlands and Waterways

County, State and Federally defined wetlands and waters of the U.S. may be included within several Holland vegetation communities. These communities are typically riparian in nature, such as southern coast live oak riparian forest and southern willow scrub. However, a wetland or waters of the U.S. may occasionally be within a vegetation community that is normally considered upland, such as a coastal sage scrub vegetated drainage. The boundaries of all wetlands and waters of the U.S. must be mapped in addition to the vegetation/habitat per the Holland Codes. This can usually be accomplished using crosshatching or similar methods. In all cases, the treatment of land considered wetlands and waters of the U.S. should follow wetlands standards and guidelines at the County, State and Federal level, regardless of the overlying vegetation type.

The following is the County Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO) wetland definition:

- (1) Lands having one or more of the following attributes are “wetlands”:
 - (aa). At least periodically, the land supports a predominance of hydrophytes (plants whose habitat is water or very wet places);
 - (bb). The substratum is predominantly undrained hydric soil; or
 - (cc). An ephemeral or perennial stream is present, whose substratum is predominately non-soil and such lands contribute substantially to the biological functions or values of wetlands in the drainage system.

- (2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1) above, the following shall not be considered "Wetlands":
- (aa) Lands which have attribute(s) specified in paragraph (1) solely due to man-made structures (e.g., culverts, ditches, road crossings, or agricultural ponds), provided that the Director of Planning and Land Use determines that they:
 - (i) Have negligible biological function or value as wetlands;
 - (ii) Are small and geographically isolated from other wetland systems;
 - (iii) Are not Vernal Pools; and,
 - (iv) Do not have substantial or locally important populations of wetland dependent sensitive species.
 - (bb) Lands that have been degraded by past legal land disturbance activities, to the point that they meet the following criteria as determined by the Director of Planning and Land Use:
 - (i) Have negligible biological function or value as wetlands even if restored to the extent feasible; and,
 - (ii) Do not have substantial or locally important populations of wetland dependent sensitive species.

(Note: Activities on lands not constituting "Wetlands" because of this paragraph (2) may still be subject to mitigation, avoidance and permitting requirements pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act or other applicable County, state and federal regulations.)

A "non-soil" substrate includes, but is not limited to, rock outcroppings, deepwater habitats (generally greater than 6.6 feet in depth), cobble rock, bedrock or scoured channels.

The above definition of wetlands is based on the same basic attributes (hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and hydrology) as those of the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, although those agencies have definitions with slightly different language and requirements.

Simplified Method of Wetlands Mapping – This method may be used in most cases where riparian vegetation, areas of potentially hydric soils and drainage features with a defined bed and bank are/will be largely avoided through project design and the applicant wishes to minimize processing costs. The mapping of wetlands and/or waters of the U.S. can often be completed with site visits and review of aerial photographs, and with topographical, vegetation and soil maps. Under this method wetlands and/or waters of the U.S. are conservatively identified to extend to the outermost limit of riparian vegetation (canopy drip line or scrub line boundary), hydric soils, or the defined bed and bank of a drainage feature, whichever is greatest.

Formal Method of Wetlands Mapping – A formal wetland delineation may be completed under the following conditions: 1) there may be extensive impacts (both direct and indirect) to or within the immediate proximity of identified County, State and/or Federal wetlands and waters of the U.S., 2) the project applicant believes that using the

simplified method of wetlands mapping results in an overly conservative delineation of the extent of wetlands, 3) there is disagreement between the County and the individual completing the delineation. Under this method the delineation must conform to the *Army Corps of Engineers 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual*, understanding that the County definition of a wetland differs from the federal and state definitions. The boundaries of all wetlands and waters of the U.S., as defined by each of the agencies, must be clearly identified. When a formal wetland delineation is completed, a separate wetland delineation map is required *in addition* to showing the extent of wetlands on the Map. Data sheets or other information that was used to complete the delineation should be provided in addition to the mapping.

3.4.4 Wetland Buffer

The boundary of all wetland buffers must be mapped in addition to the vegetation/habitat per the Holland Codes. This can usually be accomplished using crosshatching or similar methods. The following is the wetland buffer definition from the Resource Protection Ordinance:

“Lands that provide a buffer area of an appropriate size to protect the environmental and functional habitat values of the wetland, or which are integrally important in supporting the full range of the wetland and adjacent upland biological community. Buffer widths shall be 50 to 200 feet from the edge of the wetland as appropriate based on the above factors. Where oak woodland occurs adjacent to the wetland, the wetland buffer shall include the entirety of the oak habitat (not to exceed 200 feet in width).”

The following factors are considered in determining the appropriate width of the buffer: the current setting of the project site (natural v. disturbed), the quality of the vegetation communities on site, the presence/absence of wildlife, and the size of the wetland.

3.4.5 Oak Woodlands

For oak woodland habitats, the edge of the canopy defines the woodland boundary. To protect the sensitive root systems of this habitat, a 50-foot ~~buffer~~[oak root protection zone \(see Attachment A for description of this zone\)](#), measured outward from the outside edge of the canopy, must be included on the map. [This oak root protection zone typically consists of other habitat and is not part of the oak woodland.](#)

Individual mature oak trees (measuring 6” dbh), identified outside, but within 100 feet of established oak woodland shall be mapped as part of the woodland.

[Attachment A]

Typical Mitigation Measures

When it has been established that a significant impact will potentially occur, the project must propose mitigation to lessen or compensate for the impact. As defined by CEQA (Section 15370), mitigation includes either measures to avoid, minimize or rectify impacts or measures that compensate for impacts by replacing or providing substitute resources. The following is a list of typical mitigation measures that may be included as conditions on a project that has significant impacts:

Biological Open Space/Conservation Easement

A Biological Open Space/Conservation Easement is required to preserve land on-site either as a means of avoidance of a particular resource or for mitigation for impacts elsewhere on the site. If the preservation is to be considered for credit towards mitigation requirements, the easement must be designed in accordance with the Project Design Guidelines. All restrictions and any possible exceptions to the open space easement shall be included in the easement language. For example, if trails are planned, they shall be listed as an exception with a detailed description of allowable uses and location (preferably referencing a map). Open space easements that protect wetlands will require an exception for vector control by the Department of Environmental Health (DEH) and may require an exception to allow future flood control prevention activities (discuss with the Department of Public Works to evaluate when this applies). In all cases where revegetation and/or resource management plans are required, easements shall be written to allow implementation of these plans, including allowing access by the appropriate habitat managers.

The only difference between an open space easement and a conservation easement is that the California Department of Fish and Game is named a Third Party to a conservation easement for enforcement purposes. Conservation easements shall be required for all projects within the MSCP when the open space is considered a Biological Resource Core Area (and therefore, part of the Preserve).

All Open Space/Conservation Easements require the landowner to perform basic stewardship measures to ensure the preservation of the land. A Resource Management Plan (RMP) shall be prepared when a project proposes open space totaling 50 acres or more. RMPs may also be required when open space less than 50 acres is proposed if a particularly sensitive resource is present that would benefit from active management and/or monitoring.

Vacation of Existing Open Space Easements

If existing dedicated Biological Open Space Easements are being vacated, the loss of preserved habitat shall be mitigated at twice the required ratios because: 1) the original mitigation must be replaced; and 2) the current loss of habitat must be mitigated. In some cases, mitigation may be at a 1:1 ratio if land previously identified as being

[impacted is switched for previously designated open space. If this is proposed, the switching must provide an equal or greater benefit as open space based on habitat type, quality, species present and biological function \(i.e., connectivity, corridor, etc.\).](#)

Areas Labeled as “Not A Part” on Plot Plans

This is not an easement, but rather a designation on the plot plan for either a Major or Minor Use Permit. These areas are protected just as areas within an open space easement. A Use Permit Modification and subsequent environmental review would be required before these areas could be graded, cleared, developed or otherwise disturbed. In addition to designating the area on the plot plan, a condition will be placed on the Use Permit stating these areas are to remain protected for the life of the Use Permit. Any use exceptions (i.e., trails, etc.) shall be included in the Use Permit conditions.

Limited Building Zone Easement

This easement is required adjacent to any on- or off-site biological open space or conservation easement. The easement prohibits the building of structures that would require vegetation clearing within the protected open space for fuel management purposes. The Limited Building Zone shall extend at least 100 feet from the open space boundary. This distance may be extended or reduced if approved by the appropriate fire authorities and supported by the Fire Protection Plan for the project. The easement shall include the provision to allow structures that do not require fire fuel modification/vegetation management. See Attachment B of these guidelines for a graphic depicting the Limited Building Zone Easement.

Oak Root Protection Zone

[In order to protect the shallow root systems of oak trees within existing or proposed open space easements, the County requires a minimum 50-foot oak root protection zone between the dripline and the nearest ground disturbance \(i.e., grading or trenching\). This oak root protection zone typically consists of other habitat and is not part of the oak woodland. This zone permits above-ground fire fuel management activities, but prohibits any ground disturbance. The above-ground habitat within the oak root zone is considered a direct impact due to fire fuel management, and must be mitigated as required.](#)

[Oak root protection zone\(s\) shall be placed into dedicated open space, but the easement language will allow fire-clearing within the 50-foot zone. Signs and fences \(when required\) shall be located at the edge of the Biological Open Space Easement, and permanent markers placed at fuel management area.](#)

[When oak root protection zone\(s\) are used, the required Limited Building Zone Easement width can be reduced by 50 feet, since the oak root protection zone will allow fire fuel modification.](#)

Off-site Purchase or Preservation of Habitat

This includes the purchase of habitat credits within a County approved mitigation bank. Prior to accepting the purchase to fulfill mitigation requirements, the County may request accounting of habitat credits from the bank and evidence that the bank is managing the land appropriately. If the required habitat cannot be found within a bank, the preservation of habitat within open space easements on privately-owned land may be allowed. In these cases, a biological survey of the proposed mitigation land will be required to verify mitigation requirements have been met. An open space or conservation easement must be dedicated over the land. In addition, the County will require a Resource Management Plan for the long-term care of the habitat and will require an endowment of secured funding for perpetual maintenance of the property.

For offsite mitigation purchase for biological impacts outside the boundaries of the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP), Habitat to be acquired off site shall be the same habitat type and/or comparable in biological function and value to the habitat that is being impacted and, to the maximum extent feasible, be located in the unincorporated area, and in the same "Ecoregion" as the proposed project.

Note: For offsite mitigation purchase inside the boundaries of the MSCP, the mitigation land may be located in any ecoregion within the MSCP boundary.

Maximum extent feasible is defined as: in cases where it is possible to locate two or more mitigation banks or properties for acquisition under different ownerships with the same habitat type, comparable biological function and value to the habitat being impacted, and within the same "ecoregion," the mitigation shall be acquired in one of said banks or properties.

In cases where it is not possible to locate at least two banks or properties for acquisition under different ownerships that meet all of the biological and geographic criteria, staff shall determine feasibility using the following waivers, in order, until two banks or properties for acquisition under different ownerships qualify:

- The requirement that the habitat acquired be located within the same ecoregion may be waived and expanded into immediately adjacent ecoregions within the unincorporated area, with the appropriate habitat type and comparable biological function and value.
- If two banks or properties for acquisition under different ownerships still do not qualify, the requirement that the habitat acquired be located within the unincorporated area may be waived and expanded into adjacent cities (with a preference to be located within the same ecoregion) with the appropriate habitat type and comparable biological function and value.

If, after exhausting these waivers there are not two banks or properties for acquisition under different ownerships that qualify, the following must occur:

- If there is only one bank or property that qualifies, the applicant is encouraged to enter into an agreement with that bank before tentative or conditional approval of the entitlement. This will avoid the situation where applicants may be asked to pay substantially above-market rates after such entitlement is granted. Staff will then recommend to the decision-maker that the applicant be required to acquire the off-site biological mitigation in said bank or property.
- If there are no banks or properties that qualify, off-site mitigation must be considered infeasible and alternative mitigation/ordinance compliance mechanisms will need to be pursued. These alternatives may include but not be limited to project redesign, habitat creation, or other methods to achieve mitigation requirements on-site. If alternatives or other mechanisms cannot achieve acceptable mitigation for project impacts, the project may have a significant effect on the environment and therefore, would require an Environmental Impact Report.

Revegetation Plans

To satisfy the County's no-net-loss policy for wetlands, any impacts to wetlands requires the creation of wetlands either on or off-site. A Revegetation Plan shall be prepared for all wetland creation and restoration efforts. Although revegetation is not typically allowed as mitigation for upland habitat impacts, a Revegetation Plan may be required to enhance or repair upland areas as well.

A conceptual Revegetation Plan outlining the draft revegetation plans will be required during the processing of a discretionary project, and will be distributed during the CEQA public review period. The project will then be conditioned to submit for approval a final Revegetation Plan completed in accordance with the County's Revegetation Requirements.

The actual revegetation condition placed on the project shall outline any specific requirements for the revegetation project (i.e., acreages, types of vegetation, specific species, location, etc.). In all cases, whether explicitly stated or not, only native species should be used. When possible, the seed or plant stock used should be harvested from the vicinity of the revegetation site. A condition to dedicate an open space easement over the area to be revegetated shall be included as a separate project condition.

Root Stock, Seed or Specimen Collection

Some projects may be required to collect specimens or genetic material either from the general area or in some cases, specifically from the area being impacted. This may either be in conjunction with a Revegetation Plan or a separate species-based mitigation requirement. The condition shall provide exact requirements, including collection locations and location to be transplanted to or kept in storage (if a seed bank were created).

Enhancement of Open Space

This may be required when the open space would benefit from enhancement activities, such as removal of exotic species, hydroseeding or cowbird trapping. Enhancement may be required when edge effects from the proposed project are expected to be fairly high or when the project requests mitigation credit for on-site open space over disturbed areas. The exact enhancement activities required shall be outlined in the condition placed on the project.

Resource Management Plans (RMP)

A Resource Management Plan shall be required when a project proposes open space that would significantly benefit from active management and monitoring. RMPs are also required when a project proposes purchase of off-site habitat that is not within a formal mitigation bank. The intent of an RMP is to ensure the viability and value of the open space is maintained in perpetuity. RMPs shall be prepared based on the County's RMP guidelines, when a project proposes open space totaling 50 acres or more. RMPs may also be required when open space less than 50 acres is proposed if a particularly sensitive resource is present that would benefit from active management and/or monitoring.

Projects shall be conditioned to submit the RMP for approval prior to any grading, clearing or other development of the site. The RMP shall outline the timeline for any additional submittals that may be required, including monitoring reports, annual statements that all fencing/signs are present, etc.

Transfer Fee Title of Open Space to the County or Other Entity

Transferring fee title shall generally be required whenever open space is presented as a separate lot on a parcel map. The open space may be deeded to an established conservancy group upon the approval of the Director of DPLU or to the County Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). If deeded to a conservancy group, dedication of an open space or conservation easement over the land will also be required. DPR will review sites for suitability before deciding whether to accept fee title. If accepted, DPR will decide the terms and conditions of the transfer, including endowments, on a project-by-project basis.

Breeding Season Avoidance

Grading, clearing and improvement plans will be conditioned such that land disturbance would occur outside of the relevant breeding season for any species of concern on a particular site.

Permanent Signs

Signs may be required where needed along open space boundaries or within open space (i.e., along trails) to prevent encroachment into the sensitive areas. The number and location of the signs will be based on a number of project and site specific factors, such as lot shapes and sizes, biological resources present, topography and intensity of expected encroachment.

Permanent Fencing or Walls

Fencing or walls will be required where needed along open space easement boundaries to limit encroachment into the open space. Similar to signs, the location of permanent fencing or walls will be based on project and site-specific factors, such as lot shapes and sizes, biological resources present, topography and intensity of expected encroachment. Permanent fencing or walls shall generally be required when open space is proposed within 300 feet of development or when open space is included within residential lots less than 5 acres in size. Fencing and walls need only be installed between development and open space and should not be placed between on and off-site contiguous open space. The design and materials of fencing and walls will generally be restricted when there is a biological reason to do so, such as needing a solid wall to act as a noise barrier or requiring something impermeable to limit amphibian or small mammal movement.

Temporary Fencing

Temporary fencing will be required along all open space boundaries where clearing or grading is proposed within 100 feet of on- or off-site preserved habitat and permanent fencing has not yet been constructed. Temporary fencing intends to prevent encroachment into biologically sensitive areas during grading, clearing and construction. Temporary fences are not necessary if permanent ones have already been installed (however, for many projects, permanent fencing is not installed until after grading is complete.)

Evidence That Federal and State Permits Have Been Obtained

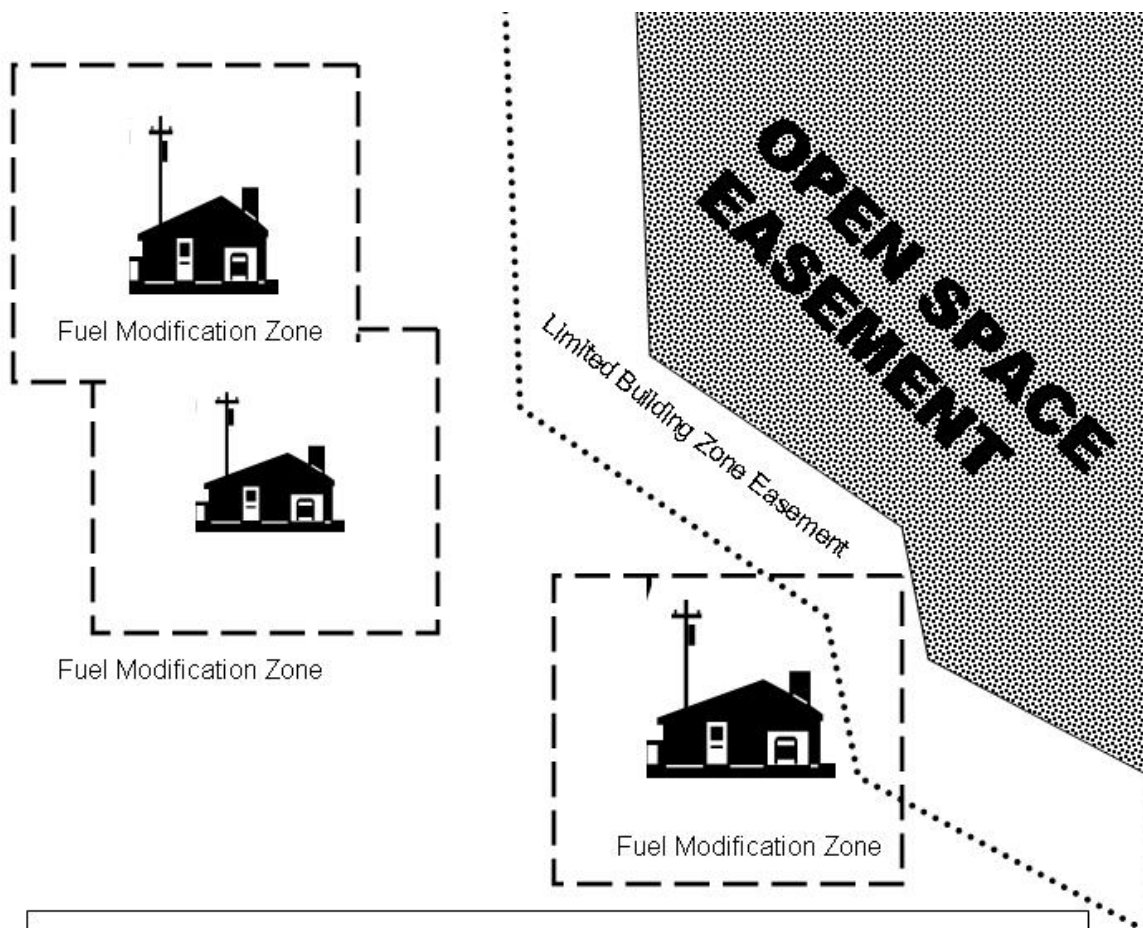
Evidence that all required permits have been obtained will be required when a project may potentially require a Federal or State permit for the take of one or more endangered species (Section 7 or 10(a) permits), for impacts to wetlands (1600 permits from CDFG or 404 permits from US Army Corps of Engineers), or for discharges (401 certification from Regional Water Quality Control Board). The applicant may show evidence that no permit is necessary by submitting a letter from the responsible Federal or State agency.

Restrictions on Lighting and Noise

Certain restrictions may be required when the project proposes lighting or significant noise within close proximity to existing or proposed open space. This condition is not enforceable on subdivisions or similar projects, which involve private residential lots adjacent to the open space. Therefore, lighting and noise must be limited in those circumstances by designing the project in compliance with the San Diego County Light Pollution Code (Sections 59.101-59.115), San Diego County Noise Ordinance (Sections 36.401 et seq.) and the San Diego County Noise Element. However, conditional use permits can be conditioned to control noise and lighting, including timing and acceptable levels. The condition would extend for the life of the permit and non-compliance would allow the County to revoke the permit.

Additional measures beyond those listed above may also be necessary based on a particular project and the biological resources present. Projects should be carefully conditioned to ensure the timing for required mitigation measures is both enforceable and appropriate. Projects should be conditioned to satisfy most, if not all, of their biological mitigation prior to all grading, clearing or any other disturbance to the site. The only exceptions to this rule are mitigation measures that may only be completed after certain actions, such as permanent fencing when temporary fencing is required during grading. In this case, permanent fencing would be required prior to finalizing the map. Be aware that inside MSCP, Third Party Beneficiary Status is only conveyed after all biological mitigation measures have been satisfied. Therefore, if the conditions on these projects are not correctly timed, an applicant may not have coverage under the Endangered Species Act for impacts to listed species.

Limited Building Zone Easements



The Difference Between Fuel Modification Zone
and Limited Building Zone Easement



Fuel Modification Zone
(also known as Fire Clearing Area)
Protects Structure



Limited Building Zone Easement
Protects Open Space

These Zones may or may not overlap

[Attachment C]

Staff Biological Review Checklist

This checklist will be used by County staff to ensure that submitted Biological Reports address all requirements of the Report Format and Content Requirements.

	XIS1	XIS2	XIS3	Project Name and Numbers:
Document Submitted				Biological Resource Map
				Biological Resource Letter Report
				Full Biological Resource Report
Biological Resource Map				Was an appropriate scale used?
				Does map include the latest project plot plan?
				Signed by an approved County consultant?
				All locations of sensitive species and habitats shown or appropriately noted?
				Include proposed Open Space Easements and Limited Building Zone Easements?
				Show all off-site project impacts?
				Show resources within 100 feet of project boundary?
Report Preparer				Prepared by a County Approved Consultant?
Project Description				Does project description include all off-site project impacts, (fire fuel modification/vegetation management, access roads, utility lines, construction staging, drainage structures, etc.)?
				Does report discuss all on-site project impacts, including location of leach fields, fire fuel modification/vegetation management areas and specifications, graded areas, access, noise producers (pump stations), stormwater BMPs, landscaping, and lighting, as applicable?
Survey Methods				Was survey time and season appropriate?
Habitats				Do all habitats on site have a site-specific description and acreage?
				Do the acreages add up to the total project site size?
Sensitive Species				Check scoping letter: were all requested focused surveys done?
				If Protocol surveys done, does report include permit number of surveyor?
				Check sensitive species list provided with the scoping letter: Does the report address all sensitive species?
				Check report's species list and focused surveys for additional sensitive species that should be discussed.
				Does the report adequately discuss potential raptor foraging and nesting?
				Does the report adequately discuss large mammal use of the site?

	XIS1	XIS2	XIS3	PROJECT NAME AND NUMBERS
Sensitive Species (continued)				Does the report adequately discuss local and/or regional wildlife corridors and/or linkages?
				Does the report adequately discuss native wildlife nursery sites?
				For Final Reports, report includes a copy of NDDB form?
Wetlands				Are there RPO wetlands on site? Federal or state wetlands/waters?
				Are appropriate wetland buffer(s) proposed for all RPO wetlands? Is appropriate mitigation proposed for federal and/or state wetlands/waters?
				Are all wetlands and wetland buffers included in Open Space Easements?
Open Space				Does the project propose Open Space? Is the design appropriate for protection of specific resources? Are biological buffers included where necessary?
				Are all Open Space Easements surrounded by a Limited Building Zone Easement (check Fire Service letter and Fire Protection Plan)?
				Do you suspect that fire modeling is required to identify a larger Limited Building Zone Easement?
Impact Analysis				Does the report adequately discuss direct project impacts?
				Does the report adequately discuss indirect Project Impacts?
				Does the report adequately discuss cumulative Project Impacts?
Proposed Mitigation				Are Mitigation Ratios correct?
				Is On-Site Preservation Proposed?
				Is Off-Site Mitigation Proposed?
				Are proposed mitigation measures adequate? Are other measures necessary? (breeding season avoidance, biological monitoring, fencing, signage, BMPs, etc.)
CEQA Conclusion				Has project mitigated all biological impacts to less than significant?
				Does the project have significant unmitigated biological impacts?

Staff Completing Checklist: _____

Date: _____

[ATTACHMENT D]

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

REPORT FORMAT AND CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANS



LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENT GROUP

Department of Planning and Land Use
Department of Public Works

1.0 INTRODUCTION

These Resource Management Plan Guidelines provide guidance for the preparation of Resource Management Plans (RMP) submitted to the County of San Diego. These guidelines apply to RMPs completed for public and private projects reviewed by the Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU), Department of Public Works (DPW) and/or the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR).

An RMP is required when a project proposes open space that would significantly benefit from active management and/or monitoring of biological and/or cultural resources. An RMP shall always be required when a project proposes open space totaling 50 acres or more regardless of the kind of sensitive resources on site. RMPs may also be required when open space is less than 50 acres, where a particularly sensitive resource is present that would benefit from active management and/or monitoring to ensure no direct or indirect impacts to the resource(s).

Resource Management Plans (RMPs) solely for biological resources may also be referred to as Habitat Management Plans (HMPs). Resource Management Plans prepared for lands within the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) shall comply with requirements in the Framework Management Plan (FMP) as well as species requirements in Table 3.5 of the MSCP Plan. Applicable portions of the FMP have been incorporated into these guidelines.

When open space is located near areas with existing or draft management plans (including but not limited to HMPs and Area-Specific Management Directives), preparation of the RMP shall include consultation with resource managers of adjacent lands to incorporate resource management tasks consistent with existing and proposed adjacent resource management. Existing plans may also be amended to include the proposed open space if the same management entity will manage the proposed open space.

All RMPs for land within the jurisdiction of the County of San Diego shall follow the format and guidance in this document. The overall length of reports and the amount of information to include will vary depending on the size and scope of the preserved land, the regional setting, the resources present and the degree of management required.

Requirements contained in RMPs supercede requirements contained in Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions (CCRs).

2.0 PLAN REQUIREMENTS

2.1 General Guidelines

All written plans shall follow these general guidelines:

- RMPs shall be concise and written in a professional manner suitable for peer

review. Staff may reject reports based on quality if the report is written in such a manner that a timely and accurate review cannot be completed.

- The RMP need not include sections that are not applicable. Additional sections may be added with the approval of the Director of DPLU/DPR/DPW.
- Plans shall be bound such that staff may easily review the document. Shorter reports may be stapled, but longer documents should be bound by other methods, such as comb binding.
- Attached plot plans and maps shall be to scale and contain a north arrow and both number and bar scales. When maps are reduced, adjust the scale, or mark the map "Reduced/Use Bar Scale".
- Each chapter and subsection of the report shall be clearly delineated using bold print and/or underlining and shall use the numerical headings contained in these guidelines.
- Draft copies of the report shall have all changes made in response to staff comments in strikeout/underline form. Final copies of the report shall be clean, with all editing marks removed.
- Resource Management Plans shall be signed by one of the following:
 - A County-approved biology consultant, or
 - Resource Manager as approved by the DPLU, DPW or DPR, or
 - DPLU, DPW or DPR.
- After approval of the final Resource Management Plan, annual monitoring reports and review fees shall be submitted to the County.

All RMPs will be reviewed for technical accuracy and completeness by a County biologist. During discretionary project review, projects requiring RMPs will be required to submit at least a conceptual RMP for staff review prior to project approval. Projects with approved conceptual RMPs will then be required to provide a final RMP as a condition of the project. [Conceptual RMPs shall include enough detail to demonstrate that management will be adequate CEQA mitigation for project impacts.](#)

Plans are considered draft until staff approves the plan in writing.

2.2 Required Sections of Resource Management Plan

COVER PAGE

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6.0 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN SUMMARY AND BUDGET

6.1 Operations and Budget Summary

6.2 Existing Staff and Additional Personnel Needs Summary

7.0 REFERENCES CITED

LIST OF FIGURES

If appropriate, provide a list of figures (including all maps, drawings, or charts) along with page number(s).

LIST OF TABLES

If appropriate, provide a list of any tables along with page number(s).

APPENDICES (As necessary):

1. *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)*
2. *Property Descriptions (e.g., metes and bounds, coordinate angle points)*
3. *Regional Location Map*
4. *Property Map*
5. *Easement Map (e.g., open space(s), utilities, access, trails)*
6. *Biological Resources Map*
7. *Animal and Plant species inventories*
8. *Fencing and Signage Plan*
9. *Fire Management Plan*
10. **GIS DATA**
11. *Restoration Plans (if required)*

2.3 Content

Note: The numbering identified below should be used when preparing RMPs. The numbers and titles are shown in italics only for purposes of this document and are not required to be formatted in italics for the RMP.

COVER PAGE

The cover page shall include the following information:

- Project common name
- Project numbers (i.e., TM, ZAP, etc.) including the environmental log number (ER)
- Date (original report date plus all revisions) must be revised during each iteration of the draft report
- Name of document preparer, firm name (if applicable) and address

- Signature of preparer
- Project proponent's name and address
- Line for DPLU, DPW and/or DPR approval signature and date
- The following statement: "Prepared for the County of San Diego"

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The table of contents must follow the order and format outlined in this document. Page numbers should be assigned when possible. Appendices or Attachments shall be listed in the order in which they are discussed in the document.

List of Terms and Acronyms

BMP	Best Management Practices
CCR	Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions
DCAO	Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
DPLU	Department of Planning and Land Use
DPR	Department of Parks and Recreation
DPW	Department of Public Works
FMP	Framework Management Plan
HMP	Habitat Management Plan
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
RMP	Resource Management Plan
MSCP	Multiple Species Conservation Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Purpose of Resource Management Plan

Briefly describe the purpose of this RMP. If it is required mitigation for a specific project, include an overall description of the project and its direct and indirect impacts. Describe the resources protected by this acquisition in very general terms.

Include the following language as applicable to clearly delineate the purpose of this plan:

- 1) The plan guides management of vegetation communities/habitats, plant and animal species, cultural resources, and programs described herein to protect and, where appropriate, enhance biological and cultural values.
- 2) The plan serves as a guide for appropriate public uses of the property (if public uses are included).
- 3) The plan serves as a descriptive inventory of vegetation communities/habitats

and plant and animal species that occur on or use this property.

- 4) The plan serves as a descriptive inventory of archaeological and/or historical resources that occur on this property.
- 5) The plan establishes the baseline conditions from which adaptive management will be determined and success will be measured.
- 6) The plan provides an overview of the operation, maintenance, administrative and personnel requirements to implement management goals, and serves as a budget planning aid.

1.1.1 *Conditions and/or Mitigation Measures that Require RMP*

Discuss all permit/project conditions that require Resource Management.

1.1.2 *Agency Review and Coordination.*

If applicable, describe any review and approval by external agencies (outside of the County) such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and Native American Tribes. If there is a Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement with external agencies, please include a copy as an appendix to the RMP.

1.2 Implementation

This section shall describe how the plan will be implemented, the management entity, and the financial mechanism to support management and monitoring activities. Conceptual RMPs may or may not identify the management entity. However, the management entity should be selected/identified as early as possible.

1.2.1 *Responsible Parties/Designation of Resource Manager*

Identify the owner of the site and the manager. The County shall only accept one of the following as a resource manager:

- Conservancy Group
- Natural resources land manager
- Natural resources consultant
- County Department of Parks and Recreation
- County Department of Public Works
- Federal or State Wildlife Agency (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game)
- Federal Land Manager such as Bureau of Land Management
- City Land Managers, including but not limited to Department of Parks and Recreation, Watershed Management or Department of Public Works.

Rarely, will a homeowner's association or similar group be accepted as a resource manager. In all cases, the Director of DPLU or DPW must approve the resource manager. The resource manager shall have appropriate qualifications and will preferably have demonstrated experience in southern California. Qualifications for resource managers include, but are not limited to:

- Ability to carry out habitat monitoring or mitigation activities.
- Fiscal stability including preparation of an operational budget (using an appropriate analysis technique) for the management of this RMP.
- Resource managers shall have at least one staff member with a biological, ecological, or wildlife management degree or have an MOU with a qualified person with such a degree.
- If cultural sites are present, the resource manager shall have a cultural resource professional on staff or an MOU with cultural consultant.
- The name or consultant firm of the biological and cultural resource professionals shall be identified in this section.
- Experience with habitat management in southern California.

Fee title of all separate open space lots may be transferred to a resource manager, as defined above, or other appropriate landowner (e.g., land trust, conservancy, or public agency). If the land is transferred in fee title to any non-governmental entity, a Biological Open Space Easement or Conservation Easement dedication must be recorded. This easement must always include the County and/or another appropriate responsible agency as defined under Section 815 of the California Civil Code as a grantee or third-party beneficiary. If the land is transferred to the County or wildlife agencies, no easement dedication is necessary.

If restoration and/or revegetation activities are required, management responsibility for the restoration/revegetation area remains with the restoration entity until restoration/revegetation is completed. Upon County/Agency acceptance of the restored area, management responsibility for the restoration site will be transferred to the resource manager.

1.2.2 Financial Responsibility/Mechanism

Explain the financial means to implement the plan, which should be one of the following mechanisms:

- Special District. Formation of a Lighting and Landscape District or Zone, or Community Facility District as determined appropriate by the Director of Public Works or Director of Parks and Recreation (DPR). If the developer desires DPR to manage the land, the following criteria must be met:
 - a. The land must be located inside a Pre-Approved Mitigation Area (PAMA) or proposed PAMA, or otherwise deemed acceptable by DPR.
 - b. The land must allow for public access.
 - c. The land must allow for recreational opportunities such as a trails system.

- Endowment. A one-time non-wasting endowment, which is tied to the property, to be used by the resource manager to implement the RMP.
- Other acceptable types of mechanisms including annual fees, to be approved by the Director. All funding mechanisms shall demonstrate that fees will be reliably and permanently collected for this purpose.

The applicant shall demonstrate that all RMP funding has been provided or the funding mechanism established prior to the following milestone(s):

- For subdivisions, prior to the approval of grading or improvement plans, or prior to approval of the Parcel/Final Map, which ever is first.
- For Permits (Use Permits and Site Plans), prior to obtaining any building or other permit pursuant to the Permit, and prior to commencement of construction or use of the property in reliance on the Permit.

1.2.3 Cost Estimate/Budget

The budget shall be based upon a DPLU-approved estimation technique. This section shall summarize the overall initial and recurrent cost estimate. Refer to section 6.1 for details supporting the estimates.

1.2.4 Reporting Requirements

An Annual Operation Report shall be submitted to the County (and resource agencies as applicable), along with funds to cover County staff review time. Annual reports shall discuss the previous year's management and monitoring as well as management/monitoring anticipated in the upcoming year.

The Annual Operation Report shall provide a concise but complete summary of management and monitoring methods, identify any new management issues, and address the success or failure of management approaches (based on monitoring). The report shall include a summary of changes from baseline or previous year conditions for species and communities and address any monitoring and management limitations, including weather (e.g., drought). The report shall also address any adaptive management (changes) resulting from previous monitoring results and provide a methodology for measuring the success of adaptive management.

Include copies of CNDDDB forms submitted to the State for any new sensitive species observations or significant changes to species previously reported. Include copies of invasive plant species forms submitted to the State or County.

1.2.5 Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU)

For RMPs associated with discretionary projects, the County will require a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the applicant, the County and the resource

manager be provided upon County acceptance of the final RMP. The MOU will state that the applicant agrees to implement the RMP, which includes a financing mechanism that provides perpetual funding (such as a non-wasting endowment) adequate to pay the costs of all RMP management activities. The amount of funding shall be based upon the approved RMP. The MOU shall provide a mechanism for the funds to transfer to the County in the event of the failure of the resource manager to meet the goals of the RMP. The MOU shall also provide that, prior to the approval of grading or improvement plans, and prior to approval of the Parcel/Final Map, or at the time of Final Map, whichever is first, the applicant shall demonstrate that all RMP funding has been provided or the funding mechanism established. all RMP funding has been provided or the funding mechanism established prior to the following milestone(s):

- For subdivisions, prior to the approval of grading or improvement plans, or prior to approval of the Parcel/Final Map, whichever is first.
- For Permits (Use Permits and Site Plans), prior to obtaining any building or other permit pursuant to the Permit, and prior to commencement of construction or use of the property in reliance on the Permit.

2.0 PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

This chapter should provide the most current information available to describe the property boundaries, geographical and physical characteristics and features, and land use. The following subsections may be combined if the subjects below are addressed and information is presented in a logical sequence. Include maps in the Appendix, with appropriate references in the text.

2.1 Legal Description

Provide legal property descriptions (Township/ Range/ Section or metes and bounds in the appendix) as well as the County Assessor's parcel number(s). Provide a property map with boundaries clearly outlined to place it in perspective with adjacent lands. The map shall include a north arrow and scale.

2.2 Geographical Setting

Describe property location clearly, giving written instructions on how it can be reached by unrestricted land transportation including trail access (gates, legal access across private lands, etc.). Provide a regional location map identifying county and major state or federal highway access to the property. The map should contain sufficient detail to provide information on entrances to and any open roads or trails within the site. Show local towns and crossroads, as well as a north arrow and scale. The map size shall be no less than 8-1/2 x 11 inches.

Discuss the property's location relative to the County MSCP Subarea or other existing or pending Habitat Management Plans.

2.3 Land Use

Give a brief description of prior and current land uses on the property. Describe any existing improvements on the land to be managed. Improvements may include but are not limited to structures, wells, mines, septic/sewer systems, stormwater facilities, fences, gates, fire hydrants, and power lines.

Give a brief description of land uses on adjacent properties.

2.4 Geology, Soils, Climate and Hydrology

These subjects may be combined into one subheading or separated for individual discussion, depending upon how much information is provided. Give the reader an overall assessment of geological, soils, climatic, topographic, and hydrologic factors that will influence management objectives. Only provide information pertinent to management of the area.

On site soils may influence species distributions, water regimes and agricultural activities. Discuss soil types which have significant impacts on management. Soils types within existing or proposed trails areas are virtually always important to trail management. A soils map may be helpful in making management decisions if soil types are important or complex. A detailed description is not necessary unless it relates to management. Regional soil maps are available from Natural Resource Conservation Service.

A discussion of local climate including information such as seasonal norms for high and low temperatures, seasonal average precipitation, growing season, and any other climatic factors that influence the area, or should be considered in managing the property.

On some properties, hydrological and water right information will be extremely important. If not previously addressed, describe the site's watershed context in this section. Describe all known surface and subsurface water sources and their seasonal influences on management of the area, including artificial water bodies. If there are wells on the land to be managed, provide the depth to groundwater and pumping rate, if known. Provide information regarding any surface water rights, (e.g., riparian, pre-1914, adjudicated, appropriative) and current points of diversion. For appropriative rights, include State Water Resources Control Board application permit and license numbers and identify whether use is for direct diversion, storage or both. Also, identify any contracts, Memorandums of Understanding or other agreements related to water use and include these agreements as an appendix.

2.5 Trails

Describe any existing or proposed on-site or off-site trails. Existing or proposed trails on adopted community or regional trail plans must be reviewed for connectivity. Descriptions should include locations of trails, approximate widths, and acceptable or existing users (i.e., hiking, mountain biking, equestrian, off-road users).

2.6 Easements or Rights

Provide documentation of any easements issued to others within or across the property, and any easements over adjacent properties for ingress/egress to the property. A map of easements should be provided as an appendix. The map size shall be no larger than 11 x 17 inches. For larger properties where it is not possible to create a clear map that is 11 x 17 inches, additional sheets with match-lines should be used.

2.7 Fire History

Discuss past fire events that have occurred on the property, including dates, fire intensity and locations if known. Discuss fire cycles, such as the property's location relative to known local fire regimes, prevailing winds, fuel sources, etc. If possible, include maps that show the extent of past fires.

3.0 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES DESCRIPTION

This chapter provides a descriptive baseline inventory of habitat(s) and species that were observed or are likely to use the habitat, as well as general ecological information necessary for proper habitat management. This section should provide sufficient information to develop and support the Management Element goals and tasks discussed later. All biological information developed for this section shall be provided in GIS format to the County.

3.1 Vegetation Communities/Habitats

This information shall be obtained in accordance with the County's Biological Report Format and Content Requirements, available at: http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/Resource/docs/3~pdf/Biological_Report_Format.pdf.

At a minimum, the discussion shall include:

- List of all vegetation communities/habitats with description and code (Holland, 1986; Oberbauer, 2005)
- Description of quality of community
- Documented invasive and/or non-native species populations

A biological resources map and animal and plant species lists shall be included as appendices to the RMP. A biological map in accordance with the County Report Format and Content Guidelines shall be included as an attachment.

3.2 Plant Species

This information shall be obtained in accordance with the County's Biological Report Format and Content Requirements. At a minimum, the discussion shall include:

3.2.1 *Plant species present and correlation of species with habitat on site*

3.2.2 *Rare, Threatened, or Endangered plant species present or likely to occur, including MSCP coverage status, if applicable.*

3.2.3 *Non-native and/or invasive plant species*

3.3 Wildlife Species

This information shall be obtained in accordance with the County's Biological Report Format and Content Requirements. At a minimum, the discussion shall include:

3.3.1 *Wildlife species present and correlation of species with habitat on site*

3.3.2 *Rare, Threatened, or Endangered wildlife species present or likely to occur, including MSCP coverage status, if applicable.*

3.3.3 *Non-native and/or invasive wildlife species*

3.4 Overall Biological and Conservation Value

Summarize the overall biological value of the land. Describe the value of preserving and managing the land. Describe how it will fit into larger biological conservation goals, provide for the conservation of rare, threatened, or endangered species, and what unique features the site possesses (i.e., local wildlife corridors, regional wildlife linkages, regional planning context, etc.).

3.5 Enhancement and Restoration Opportunities

Describe any opportunities for restoration and enhancement of native habitats or reintroductions of historically present sensitive species. Describe any past enhancement, revegetation, and/or restoration activities.

4.0 CULTURAL RESOURCES DESCRIPTION

This chapter provides a descriptive inventory of all cultural resources, both archaeological and historical, found on the property. This section is not required if the land to be managed has no cultural resources. If no identification or evaluation has been conducted, check the CEQA guidelines for appropriate action in dealing with suspected or known cultural sites. At a minimum, state that a cultural resource survey and inventory will be completed where appropriate, prior to any management activity.

4.1 Archaeological Resources

Describe any known archaeological sites without providing their specific locations on the property, and include a summary of the results of any site surveys, inventories, and significance evaluations, including who conducted them. An assessment of the impacts of management should be given for such sites. A description of future consultations or analysis needed for future activities should be included if not already discussed. For example, consultations could be required for future trails, future construction of structures (e.g., foot bridges, kiosks, bollards, fences, etc.), or interpretive information for educational activities.

4.2 Native American Consultation

Discuss all Native American tribe consultation(s) regarding the cultural resources and their levels of consultation interest. Consultation with local tribes pursuant to Government Code 65562.5 is required for any open space that contains cultural sites, even if the primary purpose of the open space is not for cultural resources. Such consultation(s) shall be summarized, including any role that tribes may have in use and management of the cultural sites located in the open space. If consultation has not taken place, state when it will be initiated or why it is not required.

4.3 Historical Resources

Describe all existing structures including roads, levees, fencing, and buildings, and their intended future use. If such structures are likely to be considered "historical resources" as defined in state and local law, the plan must preserve and maintain these resources to the extent prudent and feasible.

5.0 MANAGEMENT ELEMENTS AND GOALS

This chapter is the heart of the management plan, and provides direction for management actions on the property. The goals and tasks will guide all management decisions. Goals and tasks shall be numbered for ease of reference in later tables.

5.1 Biological Element: Goals and Tasks

The Biological Element includes vegetation communities/habitats and plant and animal species for which management goals and tasks have been developed within the plan.

Goals. This section shall include one or more written goals to identify the intended long-range results of biological resource management. Each goal shall include a description, as well as management information and direction on how to meet or exceed the goal. Goals shall be presented in the same order as section 3.0 to the extent possible.

Sample Biological Goals include but are not limited to:

- Preserve and manage lands to the benefit of the flora, fauna, and native ecosystem functions reflected in the natural communities occurring within the RMP land.
- Manage the land for the benefit of sensitive species, MSCP covered species, and existing natural communities, without substantive efforts to alter or restrict the natural course of habitat development and dynamics.
- Reduce, control, and where feasible eradicate non-native, invasive flora and/or fauna known to be detrimental to native species and/or the local ecosystem.

Tasks. This section shall specify individual projects or work elements that implement the goals. These tasks will be used to generate budgets and operational schedules.

The RMP shall sufficiently describe each task and provide information on how each task will be accomplished, including the frequency for each task, any required protocols, consistency with regional planning efforts, etc. Note: This section of tasks includes only those related to biological monitoring, management, and control. Tasks relating to administration, facilities construction and maintenance (e.g., annual reports, fences, signs) are discussed in section 5.3.

Sample Biological Tasks include but are not limited to:

- Baseline inventory of resources (if original biological inventory is over 5 years old)
- Update biological mapping
- Removal of invasive species
- Predator control
- Habitat Restoration (Installation and monitoring/management)
- Poaching control
- Species surveys
- Species management
- Noise management (during construction, post-construction, and/or operation, as required)
- Monitoring (specify frequency/schedule, seasons, limitations or methodologies, standard or required protocols, qualitative vs. quantitative, and consistency with regional planning efforts)
- For lands within the MSCP and outside PAMA, consult Table 3-5 of the MSCP Plan for required biological resource monitoring.

Management Constraints. This section shall briefly describe any internal or external management constraints that may affect meeting the RMP goals. Some examples are:

- Environmental factors such as the influence of local water availability (either surface or subsurface waters), introduction or spread of non-native species, presence of threatened and endangered species, fire, flood, drought, erosion, air pollution and hazardous waste materials;
- Legal, political or social factors which influence or mandate certain types of management; special permitting requirements (i.e., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, archaeological sites, etc.), County Ordinances (e.g., nuisance abatement), MOUs or other special agreements with private or public entities, water, timber, or mineral rights for the area;
- Financial factors such as the source of funding to be used for operation and maintenance, personnel requirements, and overall management of the area (fund source may dictate management direction).

Adaptive Management. The RMP shall discuss the process necessary to modify the plan if monitoring indicates that goals are not being met. Discuss how monitoring will be used to assess the success of adaptive management. If it is necessary to modify the plan between regularly scheduled updates, plan changes shall be submitted to the County and agencies for approval as required.

5.2 Cultural Resources Element: Goals and Tasks

The Cultural Resource Element includes archaeological sites, historic and prehistoric sites, and built historical structures.

Goals. This section shall include one or more written goals to identify the intended long-range results of management for each cultural site or group of similar sites, as appropriate. Each goal shall include a description, as well as management information and direction on how to meet or exceed the goal.

Sample Cultural Goals include but are not limited to:

- Provide adequate protection for historic and pre-historic sites that are known now and which may be identified in the future.

Tasks. This section shall specify all individual projects or work elements that implement the goals. These tasks will be used to generate budgets and operational schedules. The RMP shall sufficiently describe each task and provide information on how each task will be accomplished. Note: This section of tasks includes only those related to cultural resources management. Tasks relating to administration, facilities construction and maintenance (i.e., annual reports, fences, signs) are discussed in section 5.3.

Sample Cultural Tasks include but are not limited to:

- Capping
- Restoration
- Rehabilitation
- Site Stewardship
- Native American consultation and agreements
- Coordinate Native Americans access to cultural sites
- Monitor natural impacts
- Monitor human impacts

Management Constraints. This section shall briefly describe any internal or external management constraints which may affect meeting the goals.

5.3 Operations, Maintenance and Administration Element: Goals and Tasks

The Operations, Maintenance and Administration Element includes facility operations, recurring maintenance, and the plan's administrative program, including but not limited to administration, public safety, access control, and maintenance of facility(ies) and grounds.

Goals. This section shall include one or more written goals to identify the intended long-range results of operations and maintenance.

Sample Operations, Maintenance and Administration Goals include but are not limited to:

- Maintain sufficient access and facilities to provide for satisfying public use where such use does not conflict with biological or cultural resource management goals or compromise public safety.
- Provide facilities and the maintenance thereof that support the Biological and Cultural Resource Element Goals, provide for public use and enhance public experience, and maintain public safety.

Tasks. This section shall specify individual projects or work elements that are required for operations and maintenance of the resources. The task description shall specify the frequency for each task. Sample tasks include but are not limited to:

- Write and submit annual monitoring reports to the County
- Submit fees for County review of annual report
- Review management plan every 5 years, determine if update is required
- Installation of fencing, gates, lighting, and signs. Include a fencing and signage plan as an appendix. Refer to project condition language for specific fencing and signage requirements.
- Maintenance of fencing, gates, lighting, and signs
- Trash and debris removal
- Coordinate with Department of Environmental Health for vector control and herbicide use
- Access road maintenance
- Install and maintain stormwater BMPs / Facility Pollution Prevention Plan
- Built Structure restoration (i.e., historical structures)
- Maintain confidentiality of any archaeological site locations
- Maintain regular office hours
- Inspection and servicing of heavy equipment and vehicles
- Inspection and repair of buildings, residences and structures
- Inspection and maintenance of fuel tanks
- Coordinate with utility providers and easement holders
- Hydrological management (as required)
- Coordination with law enforcement and emergency services (e.g., fire)
- Coordinate with adjacent land managers
- Graffiti removal and vandalism repair

5.4 Public Use Element: Goals and Tasks

The Public Use Element includes recreational, scientific, Native American, or other use activities appropriate to and compatible with the RMP purposes and surrounding communities. This section is not required when no public use is proposed. When drafting appropriate public use activities, include review of community plans and adopted community and regional trails plans as well as potential impacts to the area's resources. Any proposed public use should be limited to activities associated with cultural, historic, wildlife or wild lands, and passive recreation such as non-motorized trail use. If the land will be subject to public uses, the plan shall stipulate the limits of these uses. For example, lotteries or other methods of controlling the number of

participants may be required. If applicable, provide a map of trail systems or recreational use zones identified through the management plan process. Map size should be 8-1/2 x 11 inches, although larger sites may require 11x17 inches or multiple sheets using match lines. Public use may include:

- Non-motorized, multiuse trails
- General public recreation (including bird watching, plant identification, other self-guided activities)
- Watchable Wildlife program (on certain wildlife areas and ecological reserves)
- Fishing program
- Hunting program
- Scientific research, surveys or monitoring (by outside groups)
- Trails, blinds, boardwalks or viewing platforms
- Interpretive centers, educational kiosks
- Traditional Native American basket weaving gathering areas
- Disabled Persons Access
- Public safety assurance
- Partner/coordinate with Community

Goals. This section shall include one or more written goals to identify the intended long-range results of public use. The goals shall specify the desired type and level of public use compatible with the biological and cultural resource element goals previously specified within the RMP.

Sample Public Use Goal: Provide for public access where the type and magnitude of such access would not result in substantive short- or long-term detriment to the natural or cultural resources.

Tasks. This section shall specify individual projects or work elements that implement the goals. These tasks will be used in planning operation and maintenance budgets. The task description shall specify the frequency for each task, any required standards, materials, construction methods, etc. Note: This section of tasks includes only those related to public use. Tasks relating to administration, facilities construction and maintenance (i.e., annual reports, fences, signs) are discussed in section 5.3.

Sample tasks include but are not limited to:

- Trail maintenance. For some RMPs, this section may be quite extensive. Identify and address maintenance needs based on underlying soils, existing conditions, approved uses, and the sensitivity of adjacent habitats.
- Public access control
- Ranger patrol
- Visitor/interpretive services
- Fishing and/or hunting program management
- Coordinate volunteer services
- Neighbor Education / Community Partnership

- Emergency services access/response planning. For publicly accessed areas there should be a general description of emergency response procedures and locations/routes for emergency access/evacuation. It may include a list of emergency service providers for the property, applicable procedures, or even development of an identifying grid map used by all property personnel and provided to emergency service providers for the purposes of evacuation and effective emergency response
- Preparation and reproduction of trail maps and interpretative materials
- If HOA is funding management, annual presentation to HOA

Management Constraints. This section shall briefly describe any internal or external management constraints that may affect meeting the goals.

5.5 Fire Management Element: Goals and Tasks

The Fire Management Element includes acceptable vegetation maintenance methods (e.g., hand clearing, mowing, disking, blading, etc.) used to manage wildfire risk. If fire management is required, the plan should specify the location(s), type of and frequency of clearing. This element shall also include applicable measures to implement post-fire resource protection/restoration.

If a separate Fire Protection Plan was prepared, summarize its goals and tasks in this section and include the Plan itself as an appendix to the RMP. For development projects, it is likely that Fire Protection Plans will include fire management that is beyond the responsibility of the resource manager. This section shall clearly state where the responsibility of the resource manager ends and where adjacent land-owner responsibilities begin. Locations of fuel management areas shall be shown on a map(s) included in the RMP. The map(s) shall clearly show the extent of the resource manager's fire management responsibilities.

This section shall address any cooperative agreements with local fire departments or CDFG.

Goals. This section shall include one or more written goals to identify the intended long-range results and benefits of fire management.

Sample Fire Management Goal: To establish vegetation management, operations and facilities maintenance, and public use actions which both reduce risk to people and property and protect RMP land resources.

Tasks. This section shall specify individual projects or work elements that are required for fire management. The task description shall specify the frequency for each task. Sample tasks include but are not limited to:

- Annual or biannual removal of fuel within existing fire breaks
- Coordination with the applicable fire agencies and access (gate keys, etc.) for these agencies.

- Fire evacuation planning for public use areas
- Protection of areas with high biological importance.
- Vegetation maintenance methods (e.g., hand clearing, mowing, discing, blading, weed management, etc.)
- Post-fire restoration (e.g., erosion control, sedimentation removal, reseeding, replanting, etc.)

6.0 *RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN SUMMARY AND BUDGET*

This chapter contains information in a summary format, which will guide budget preparation and work plans for the property.

6.1 *Operations and Budget Summary*

Summarize all estimated operations costs associated with management of the property. This summary will provide specific information required for annual budget preparation. Include a table using the following format. Tasks required for all RMPs are marked with an asterisk. Other listed tasks may or may not apply to a particular RMP.

Tasks	Frequency	Unit	Cost/ Unit	One- Time Cost	On-Going Cost
BIOLOGICAL TASKS					
A1 Baseline inventory of resources (if original inventory is over 5 years old)*	One time	Hours	\$___ /hr	\$_____	
A2 Update biological mapping*	Once every ___ yrs	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___ every ___ years
A3 Update aerial photography	Once every ___ yrs	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___ every ___ years
A4 Removal of invasive species*	Monthly/ Quarterly	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
A5 Predator control	Monthly/ Quarterly	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
A6 Habitat Restoration / Installation	Installation	Hours	\$___ /hr	\$_____	\$
A7 Habitat Restoration / Monitoring and Management	Monthly/ Quarterly	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
A8 Poaching control	Monthly/ Quarterly	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
A9 Species Surveys (include a separate line for each species)	Once every ___ yrs	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___ every ___ years
A10 Species management (include a separate line for each specific task)	Frequency	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
A11 Noise management, if required	Frequency	Hours	\$___ /hr	\$_____	\$___/yr
A12 For lands within the MSCP and outside PAMA, consult Table 3-5 of the MSCP Plan for required biological resource monitoring	Frequency	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
Continue until all tasks are summarized					
CULTURAL RESOURCES TASKS					
B1 Capping	One time	Hours	\$___ /hr	\$_____	
B2 Restoration	One time	Hours	\$___ /hr	\$_____	\$
B3 Rehabilitation	One time or ongoing	Hours	\$___ /hr	\$_____	
B4 Site Stewardship*	Frequency	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
B5 Native American and consultation agreements	Frequency	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___/yr

Tasks	Frequency	Unit	Cost/ Unit	One- Time Cost	On-Going Cost
B6 Coordinate Native Americans access to cultural sites	Frequency	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
B7 Monitor natural impacts*	Annual	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
B8 Monitor human impacts*	Quarterly	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
Continue until all tasks are summarized					
OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE AND ADMINISTRATION TASKS					
C1 Establish and maintain database and analysis of data	Annual	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
C2 Write and submit annual report to County*	Annual	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
C3 Submit review fees for County review of annual report*	Annual	Dollars	\$___ /yr		\$___/yr
C4 Review and if necessary, update management plan*	Every 5 years	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___ every 5 years
C5 Construct permanent signs	One-Time	___ signs	\$___ /sign	\$___	
C6 Replace signs	___ signs/yr	___ signs	\$___ /sign		\$___/yr
C7 Construct permanent fencing/gates	One-Time	___ feet	\$___ /foot	\$___	
C8 Maintain permanent fencing/gates	Frequency	___ feet/yr	\$___ /foot		\$___/yr
C9 Removal of trash and debris*	Monthly/ Quarterly	___ hrs/yr	\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
C10 Coordination with DEH and Sheriff*	Frequency	___ Hours	\$___ /hr	\$	\$
C11 Access road maintenance	Frequency	___ miles/yr	\$___/mile		\$___/yr
C12 Install stormwater BMPs	One-Time	___ Hours	\$___ /hr	\$	
C13 Maintain stormwater BMPs	Frequency	___ Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
C14 Built Structure restoration	One time	___ Hours	\$___ /hr	\$_____	
C15 Built Structure Maintenance	___ Hrs/yr	Hours	\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
C16 Maintain confidentiality of any archaeological site locations	Ongoing				
C17 Maintain regular office hours	___ Hours		\$___ /hr		\$___/yr

Tasks	Frequency	Unit	Cost/ Unit	One- Time Cost	On-Going Cost
C18 Inspection and servicing of heavy equipment and vehicles	___ Hours		\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
C19 Inspection and repair of buildings, residences and structures	___ Hours		\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
C20 Inspection and maintenance of fuel tanks	___ Hours		\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
C21 Coordinate with utility providers and easement holders	___ Hours		\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
C22 Hydrological management (as required)	___ Hours		\$___ /hr	\$___/yr	\$___/yr
C23 Coordination with law enforcement and emergency services (e.g., fire)	___ Hours		\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
C24 Coordinate with adjacent land managers	___ Hours		\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
C25 Graffiti removal and vandalism repair	___ Hours		\$___ /hr		\$___/yr
Continue until all tasks are summarized					
PUBLIC USE TASKS					
D1 Trail construction		___ Miles	\$___/mil e	\$	
D2 Trail monitoring, maintenance/ repair	Frequency	___ Miles/yr	\$ ___/mile		\$
D3 Public access control	Frequency	___ hours	\$___/hr		\$___/yr
D4 Ranger patrol	Frequency	___ hours	\$___/hr		\$___/yr
D5 Visitor/interpretive services	Frequency	___ hours	\$___/hr		\$___/yr
D6 Fishing and/or hunting program management	Frequency	___ hours	\$___/hr		\$___/yr
D10 Neighbor Education - Community Partnership	Frequency	___ hours	\$___/hr		\$___/yr
D11 Preparation and reproduction of trail maps and interpretative materials.	Frequency	___ hours	\$___/hr		\$___/yr
D12 If HOA is funding management, annual presentation to HOA	Frequency	___ hours	\$___/hr		\$___/yr
D13 Coordinate volunteer services	Frequency	___ hours	\$___/hr		\$___/yr

Tasks	Frequency	Unit	Cost/ Unit	One- Time Cost	On-Going Cost
D14 Emergency services access / response planning	Frequency	____ hours	\$____/hr		\$____/yr
Continue until all tasks are summarized					
FIRE MANAGEMENT TASKS					
E1 Coordination with the applicable fire agencies and access (gate keys, etc.) for these agencies*	Frequency	Hours	\$____/hr		\$____/yr
E2 Fire evacuation planning for public use areas	Frequency	Hours	\$____/hr		\$____/yr
E3 Protection of areas with high biological importance*	Frequency	Hours	\$____/hr		\$____/yr
E4 Hand-clearing of vegetation	Frequency	Hours	\$____/hr		\$____/yr
E5 Mowing of vegetation	Frequency	Hours	\$____/hr		\$____/yr
E6 Post-fire erosion control	Frequency	Hours	\$____/hr		\$____/yr
E7 Post-fire sedimentation removal	Frequency	Hours	\$____/hr		\$____/yr
E8 Post-fire reseeding	Frequency	Hours	\$____/hr		\$____/yr
E9 Post-fire replanting	Frequency	Hours	\$____/hr		\$____/yr
Continue until all tasks are summarized					
TOTAL				\$____	\$____

* Denotes required tasks for all RMPs

6.2 Existing Staff and Additional Personnel Needs Summary

Summarize the number of existing staff employed at or who spend a percentage of their work schedule performing tasks on the property, and any additional requirements for personnel, both full-time and temporary. Briefly outline the justifications for personnel requested without going into specific task descriptions. This may be in narrative or table format. For conceptual RMPs, details regarding existing staff may not be known if a management entity is not yet identified.

7.0 REFERENCES

Use standard scientific reference format to cite authors and their published research.